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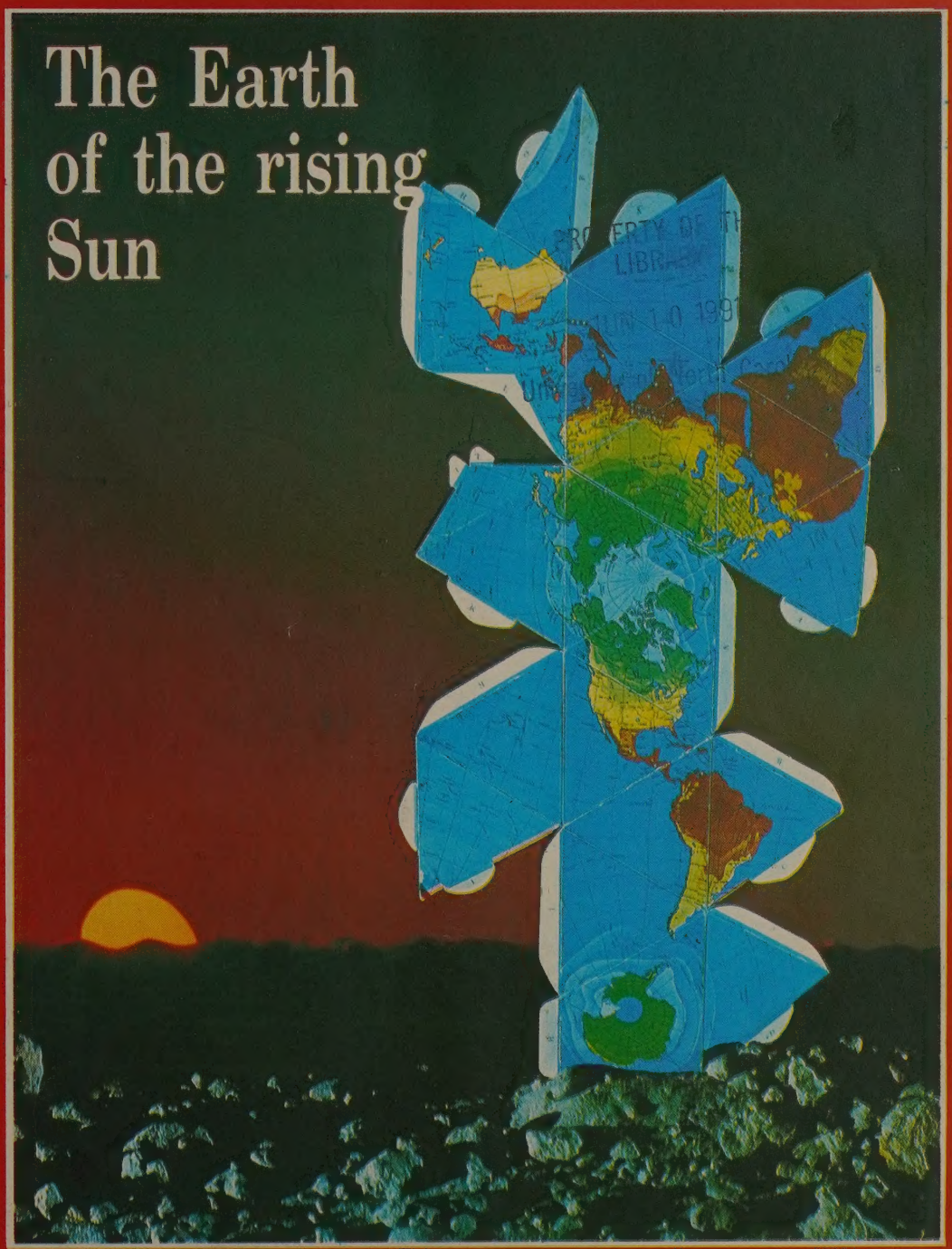

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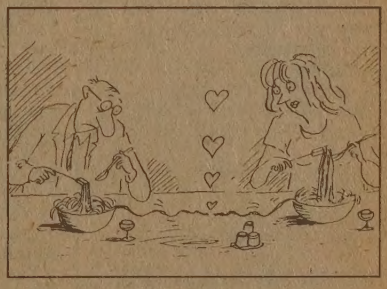

Love-making as a state concern

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Cover by Victor Brel

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POLITICAL LIFE

The boiling point of coal

The strikes have revealed the strength of workers and our reliance on guarantees and subsidies

Ksenia Myalo

The belated reaction, which many people regard as a specific feature of Gorbachev's political style, unpredictable behaviour in which the stubborn "no" is suddenly replaced by "yes" have been displayed again. As a result, the meeting finally held between the President, the Prime Minister and miners acquired the character of a tragic comedy.

Was it necessary to delay this meeting for three weeks, further destroying the already hobbling economy and bringing coke plants and blast furnaces to a standstill? The delay has raised the confrontation between the society and the government to a new level at which their interaction becomes practically impossible, even given mutual efforts of good will.

The following of Margaret Thatcher's example, who displayed her unbending firmness towards striking miners, could not bring success because the central leadership does not hold the same cards the former British Prime Minister had in her day. The situation in the Soviet Union is not stable. It can be described as chaos, which – by force of inertia and for fear of facing the truth – is still called "perestroika" by some people.

However, perestroika as such has ended, if we understand it as reforms, that is, the process of social and political changes consciously guided from above. This process has obviously gotten out of control, and all attempts of the leadership to put a brave face on a sorry business, to allege that things are going as planned and we are moving according to schedule, arouse merely bitter sneers.

But if we understand perestroika as a revolution – a dangerous word with which we thoughtlessly began to play several years ago – that is, a radical change of the social system with the leading role of mass action from below, then it can be said that perestroika has not yet started. Even in the Baltic republics and Georgia, where such a change has evidently taken place, the revolution has not yet acquired its force. In this context the strike wave of the spring of 1991 signifies a new quality of the process because for the first time since 1985 it has grown strong enough to topple political leaders or raise them up higher.

The meeting between the country's leaders and miners was, in my opinion, an attempt to check this wave. It can in no way be described as a brilliant success for either party. One can note a strange thing, the weakness of political will in the desire of miners – albeit not all – to seize their chance and gain economic concessions from the government whose resignation they uncompromisingly demanded only a few days ago.

As for the President and the Prime Minister, the moral ambiguity of their position

The working-class movement, suppressed by the authorities for decades, is coming to the surface and putting forward new leaders. It is beginning actively to interfere in politics and upset the alignment of forces. How will events develop further?

is obvious, because the tough demand for their political resignation is withdrawn (for the time being) at the price of economic concessions and the split of the working class. It is a Pyrrhic victory. The satisfaction of the miners' economic demands today can give an impulse to the escalation of economic strikes all over te country tomorrow. After all steel workers, doctors with their meagre wages, and peasants – all of them are badly off too.

Properly speaking, the escalation has already begun. It has been triggered by the recent price increases. The central government seems to be in a dead-end situation, because it is impossible to satisfy all these demands.

But is only the government in such a situation? The stormy public reaction to the price increases, which is now taken as a revolutionary process widening the gap between the working people and the country's leaders, who continue to prattle about the "socialist choice," reveals something quite different. It shows that the society is not prepared to give up the guarantees and subsidies characteristic of the "socialist choice" allegedly rejected by the public and to take a drastic step towards an effective economy which is absolutely impossible with the preservation of artificial price levels. It also shows that the society is not prepared for privations and strenuous efforts which real perestroika will require if it is destined to begin some day. Does the process in East European countries give any ground to hope that all segments of the population will be satisfied?

It can safely be said today that society will not accept any unpopular measures by the Union government. The question is whether anyone's measures will be accepted in general and whether the society – fearing both a return to totalitarianism and a vigorous advance towards a market economy which presupposes the rejection of usual benefits – has any chance to move forward without being bridled by a new Stalin or Pinochet.

In other words, is it possible to break into democracy straight from "communist totalitarianism," by passing the stage so familiar to European, and not only European, countries, namely, the stage of bourgeois dictatorship? Isn't this a utopian idea? For the political formula most popular today – a market economy plus democratic freedoms – is precisely a formula of the bourgeois epoch, moreover, of its initial period not strewn with roses.

Only the ingrained and ineradicable habit of ideologization, the inability to think historically could give rise to the idea that a combination of socialist guarantees with a free capitalist market will produce exactly what is needed. But such an idea is not realistic, and today we are faced with the need of making a choice between degradation and dynamics. Judging by events of the past few months the Union govenment is no longer able to offer a plan of dynamic progress or put it into practice.

Photo by Yuri Gripas

People's Deputy Denisenko and Kuzbass miner Malykhin: solidarity in a hunger strike and at the meeting

A time to strike and a time to work

"The government is to blame for the strikes," believes Anatoly Malykhin, a representative of the striking miners of the Kuzbass region. His speech at the Third Congress of People's Deputies of Russia was the vox populi so often referred to but so rarely heeded...

Gennady Ariyevich

After his sensational speech, Malykhin became a media star and reporters are flocking to him.

"I am not here to give interviews," he told the newsmen, visibly irritated.

Malykhin is a robust, balding man with a hard stare and energetic lips. He is 34 but he looks older, emanating confidence and authority. A leader? When he heard the word, Anatoly Malykhin made a grimace: "Why do you like these Red Indian chief games? I am an ordinary worker, a coal miner from the mine Yesaulskaya, Kuzbass region. The workers elected me to the city workers' committee because they trust me. And they sent me here because they trust me. I spoke at the Congress because my comrades wanted me to."

Malykhin's father worked in the mines for over thirty years, only to get silicosis, the miners' occupational disease, and to be reduced to a miserable pension of 70 rubles. He died at the age of 62, which is considered advanced age for a miner. Anatoly left a vocational school at the age of 16, worked as a construction worker, served in the army and after the army started working as a miner, going all the way from an ordinary miner to a drifter. Actually, there was a three-year break in his ten-year employment as a miner. Malykhin needed a flat to live in together with his family, which includes children. He decided to settle in a kolkhoz and to build a house there, but things were not so simple as Malykhin had expected. He never built himself a village house and had to return to his old place of residence. Later 60 miners joined in a youth construction cooperative volunteering to build their own flats themselves and elected Malykhin foreman.

"For two years we worked at the construction site, receiving only 70 rubles a month," Malykhin recalled. "Even today the blokes are tired as hell. We ate up all the food we and our relations had put aside for a rainy day. Today many families still have makeshift stools instead of proper furniture. But they have flats now and they can breathe more freely."

Malykhin is a deputy at the city Soviet and some people jokingly call him the city Soviet's "staff extremist."

"After the 1989 strike, a mixed public-state commission was set up to look into our problems. The workers, members of that commission, were almost openly bribed: they got hotel accommodations, better pay, plenty of spare time and participation in running the mines. Some became corrupt. Only five people, myself included, remained out of the initial composition of the Novokuznetsk city committee. It may be immodest, but people say we cannot be corrupted, or crushed: to silence us, one has to kill us."

Why did the miners decide to go on the war path?

"The main reason," Malykhin said, "is that the current conditions in the coal industry make it impossible to live or work. You sense death standing right behind you when you go down into the mines in the morning. Any miner has seen several of his comrades die in the mine in every ten years of work. Kuzbass offers a dull landscape. One can get an impression that the situation is better in Donetsk – after all there are beds of roses everywhere there. But the waste heaps are smoking all the same, belching sulphurous gases. In Donbass, miners work at a depth of over a kilometre, the temperature inside the shaft is about 42 degrees Centigrade and the beds of coal are not generous. Donbass is an inferno, even compared to the Kuzbass mines. Finally the moment came when we could not keep silent any longer. No one had prepared the 1989 strike in advance, but it spread like a brushfire. All the mines were brought to a standstill in just eight hours one night. And the pretext was a usual labour dispute in Mezhdurechensk..."

Obviously, the July, 1989, strike is still fresh in everybody's memory. The ten days of the Kuzbass strike shook the country and the strikes spread all over other coalfields. At that time I was in Kuzbass on a business trip and was shocked by the words of the CPSU leader of Novokuznetsk who told me that the miners actually demanded what the city and region party committees had long tried to get for them.

Naturally, the party secretary meant purely economic demands. At that time the

miners did not want to lose the support of local CPSU committees and resolutely distanced themselves from any political demands, catcalling representatives of various unofficial political movements.

Most miners believed then that economic problems could be resolved without any political claims. They actively negotiated with the government, worked out plans, which later proved utopian: first they wanted economic independence, later they fancied setting up a free economic zone in the region. Time went by and nothing changed. The government showed no intention to carry out its promises – all that it did was to send some trainloads of soap and sausage to the miners. Could the government have carried out its impracticable promises at all?

The miners sobered up and started turning in their party cards. Malykhin also quit his CPSU membership after being what he himself called a "CPSU guest" for two years. All party committees were withdrawn from the Kuzbass work collectives, as according to the decision of the workers. Economic demands were replaced with political ones.

"We have found ourselves in such a stiff struggle that we rapidly revolutionized instead of evolutionizing for 10 to 15 years, as we would have in normal conditions. A couple of years ago we were 'normal' Communists. We used to be proud that most workers' committee members were also CPSU members! For two years bureaucrats in party offices and ministries have been busy making fools of us. Eventually, we realized: until the question of power is resolved, no economic reform is possible. That is why we believe that the President must resign, the Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR must be dissolved, because neither the President nor the Congress have managed to live up to people's expectations. We need a general agreement on tariffs if we want normal working conditions and fair pay. But for this we also need a government trusted by the working people – for example a coalition government of popular trust. We believe that the practical way to such a government must include a round-table discussion and the setting up of an interrepublican parliamentary group in which representatives of workers' strike committees would also participate."

The miners were pushed into a political strike by what continues to drive people out to meetings, demonstrations and rallies – a hopeless life, bare shelves, an economic crisis and authorities' unwillingness and inability to undermine the pillars of the system which has brought the nation to the brink of ruin.

Representatives of strike committees noted at the press conference after their negotiations with Premier Pavlov that strikes could have been avoided had the government treated the miners seriously from the beginning and agreed to negotiate at once. Instead the government procrastinated. Central TV tried to set workers of other industries against the miners. Ignoring the political charge of the "work conflict," bureaucrats appeared on TV to dwell at length about the miners' egoism in this crucial moment in the nation's history.

"Strike committees have been accused of cultivating an order which is little better from the order in labour camps..."

"At strike committee sessions, we often argue well into the night in order to arrive at an understanding. Then we convey our recommendations to work collectives and I cannot recall a single instance when the workers disagreed with us. There is rigid discipline in our work, even obsession. We are facing a formidable enemy."

"They say you threaten to flood the mines..."

"On the contrary. We are being threatened: if they cut off electricity, we will not be able to pump water from the mines. The bosses have abandoned the mines, while we have assumed responsibility for the management and maintenance of the mines during the strikes."

"We are prepared to do our best to reach a compromise solution," said the joint declaration of representatives of the striking coalfields, "but we seriously warn that economic solutions which are not backed with political reforms will not solve the problems of either the coal industry or the whole of the country." However, the government continues to ignore the miners' political demands. Out of the 500 people who participated in the meeting with Premier Pavlov, only 195 were actually miners and only 30 of them represented the strikers, 10 participants represented the mines which have stopped their strike. Others were administrators of the coal industry and coal ministry officials. They reacted to the speeches by miners with cries of indignation and stamping of feet.

On the eve of the Pavlov conference with miners, an attempt was made to make the Union parliament outlaw the political strike and declare its organizers criminals to be fired without consent from the strike committees imprisoned for up to two years or fined three thousand rubles each... If the proposal had gone through the parliament, it would have been much easier for the bureaucrats to make a deal with each other.

After the Kremlin conference ended, I called the HQ of the Kuzbass strikers and asked whether they were satisfied with the results. "Of course not," the strikers replied. "The government has only accepted some of the economic demands. They continue to ignore our political demands. That is why the strike will continue."

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The uprisings the country did not notice

A wave of workers' uprisings swept the Soviet Union in the beginning of the 1960s. They were brutally suppressed and no information about them was allowed to leak out

Vadim Belotserkovsky

The details of the events of which I will tell below are known to me either from testimonies of witnesses or in the form of narrations. That is why I cannot vouch for the complete authenticity of all details.

In 1960 – 1962 workers' unrest took place not only in Novocherkassk (in fact, the Novocherkassk tragedy has been described fairly well) but also in 14 other cities: Aleksandrov, Murom, Nizhny Tagil, Temir-Tau, Odessa, Dneprodzerzhinsk, Lubny, Kuibyshev, Kemerovo, Krivoj Rog, Grozny, Donetsk, Yaroslavl and possibly in some other places.

Temir-Tau, Kazakhstan. In the autumn of 1959 the city of Temir-Tau witnessed what might have been the first serious instance of workers' unrest.

According to rumours, the uprising started on October 3 in the huge tent camp accommodating about 3,000 young construction workers. The young people, mostly coming from the Ukraine and Byelorussia, were dissatisfied with their poor living conditions and low pay, which was much lower than the pay of construction workers from Bulgaria, Poland and Rumania who also worked there.

Reportedly, a group of fifty young men set fire to the mess barracks in protest against the bad quality of food. Then the workers headed for Vostok, one of Temir-Tau's new districts and ransacked a market, taking away all food they found there. When the police tried to stop the outrage, the workers sent for reinforcements to the camp, erected barricades and started hurling stones at the police.

Soon about fifteen hundred workers from the camp joined the rioters.

A day later, several trucks carrying regular army soldiers arrived from Karaganda. The workers took over the trucks and disarmed the hesitant soldiers.

After that the authorities realized the riot was in fact a serious uprising and started a massive deployment of combat troops in Temir-Tau.

The troops were ordered to attack the workers. According to rumours, dozens of workers were killed.

Aleksandrov, Vladimir Region, Russian Republic. Many people told me about the events which took place in the town of Aleksandrov in the summer of 1961.

The riots there started after a worker from one of the town's factories died at a police station. The police alleged he had been arrested for malicious hooliganism and drunkenness and died of a heart attack. But rumours spreading all over the town had it that the police had simply beaten the life out of him.

People who worked at the same factory with him demanded that the factory administration start an investigation. The director, a relatively young man, demanded that the corpse be exhumed and examined in the presence of the factory doctor. It turned out that the worker had really been beaten to death. The director demanded that the guilty be punished. The police turned to Moscow for help. Interior Ministry bigwigs in Moscow brought pressure to bear on the local procuracy and the latter refused to sanction an investigation or criminal proceedings.

Workers from the plant where the deceased had worked went on strike and marched towards the towns's police department. On their way there, they were joined by workers from other factories. Many carried posters demanding that the cop-killers be brought before trial and that police arbitrariness and outrage be stopped. As it turned out later, the posters were made by the factory artist on the day before the march.

April, 1991. People protesting against the recent price hike in Minsk. A surprise?

The demonstrators reached the police department and started demanding to see the boss. One version says that the demonstrators elected a negotiating team and that that team were arrested immediately after they entered the police department building. Another version says that a shot was fired from one of the windows or workers smashed one of the windows with stones. The mob took the police HQ by storm. The police fled and the building was ransacked and burned.

A crowd of workers and townspeople moved to the town prison where the police and the town's party cadres had taken refuge. When the people assembled outside the prison they started demanding negotiations, release of all arrested workers and

First published in the *Suchastnost* magazine (USA) in 1978.

hurling stones over the walls. The gates of the prison were opened to let out soldiers with assault rifles. The crowd was ordered to disperse and then the soldiers fired warning shots into the air. The crowd staggered back and then forward and onto the soldiers. The soldiers mixed with the demonstrators. None of the soldiers was hurt, the demonstrators simply tried to explain what they were after. The horn was blown calling the soldiers to reassemble and the soldiers started making their way through the crowd and towards the gates. The crowd did not disperse. An officer ordered the soldiers to open fire but once again all shots were fired into the air and the formation was dissolved in the crowd. Once again the horn was blown and the soldiers retreated inside the prison compound. They were not ordered to go out again.

People say that some of the demonstrators had already started to leave the square when they saw other units approaching. These were different soldiers; they were the DON, Special Purpose Division. They started firing on the people point-blank. Panic started, people crushed each other in an attempt to esclape and were killed by army bullets.

A friend of mine who was spending time in Aleksandrov with his relations, heard the shots and the cries, rushed outside and saw people running down the street and policemen chasing them. The policemen were firing their pistols at the people: when the crowd was attacked by the DON troopers, the police went out of the prison compound and joined in the attack. My friend said he saw a young boy climb a fence trying to get away from a policeman but when he was already atop the fense the policeman killed him with one pistol shot. The corpse fell down on the other side of the fence and the policeman fired another shot through the boards.

For several days the town was encircled by troops, troops patrolled the streets and arrested people at night... It was annonced that the three instigators – the director, the doctor and the artist – were tried and sentenced to death.

Dneprodzerzhinsk, the Ukraine. In Dneprodzerzhinsk the riots began in the summer of 1962. That is how an anonymous *Samizdat* publication described them:

"This happened several days after the decree of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukraine stipulating measures against alcoholic abuse (June 23–26, 1962).

It was a day off, a Saturday or a Sunday. After a wedding dinner, the party and the newly weds filed out onto the street to have a stroll as is the custom in the provincial towns. A short time later they were stopped by a police patrol and ordered to go to the police station. The wedding guests and passers-by were more enraged by the policemen's rudeness than by the very fact of the apprehension. People gathered around the police, virtually encircling it and demanded that the strollers be released. The policemen had to call in a special police vehicle. The scandal was rapidly growing. Four of the strollers volunteered to get into the police car, because many of the people said they would follow the car to the police station and would give testimony in defence of those arrested.

Somewhere on the way to the police station the police car collided with a truck and a fire started. A crowd assembled around the car. Fleeing from the fire, the policemen jumped out of the car and the people saw that the policemen were drunk themselves. The crowd starterd demanding that the policemen give them the key to the police car, but the policemen refused to do that, saying there was no one inside. By that time the whole of the police car had been already ablaze and the policemen tried to escape fearing the car might blow up. So people who followed the car to the police station caught up with the scene and shouted: "Comrades, there are people inside!" The car was forced open.

Two of the people inside the car were already dead. One more died immediately after the car was opened and the last one died in hospital soon after that. The raging crowd, chanting "Fascists! Beat them! Drunks!" rushed to the police station and ransacked it. The officer on duty barely managed to inform the city party committee about the events.

The crowd then rushed towards the city party committee. The committee worker who was on duty that day (the committee did not work) had already been warned about the crowd and appeared at the entrance trying to negotiate. Soon, however, the biting remarks from the crowd irritated him and he started threatening the rioters with prison terms and repressions.

Then the crowd started smashing the windows in the city party, committee building and ransacked the interior of it. The worker on duty locked himself inside and called the first secretary of the committee at the latter's home number.

The first secretary immediately contacted unidentified army unit and up to three regiments soon got to the party committee building. After the very first demand that the crowd disperse, the troops opened machine-gun fire killing an unspecified number of rioters.

Kuibyshev. In the middle of the 1960s I came to one Kuibyshev-based plant on a business trip. As I walked in the city, I went into a cafe and asked for a mug of the famous Zhiguli beer brewed in Kuibyshev. The waiter regarded me with surprise. The cafe customers then explained to me that no beer had been available in Kuibyshev's cafes since the 1962 riots.

In 1962 Kuibyshev was expecting highly-placed visitors: Nikita Khrushchev of the Soviet Union and Jawaharlal Nehru of India. They wanted to inspect the then famous Kuibyshev Hydro-Power Plant situated 60 kilometres outside the city. But there was one problem: practically all village huts in Kuibyshev Region had straw roofs... Shortly before the Khrushchev – Nehru retinue arrived the order came from Moscow to take all the roofing slate from Kuibyshev plants and to use it instead of straw in all villages along the highway leading from the city to the power plant. Later I travelled along the highway myself and saw rare spots of old slate on the roofs, which meant that most huts had been covered with straw before the two dignitaries' visit.

They did not only cover the roofs with brand-new slate, but also rigged up a cafe right on the dam. The cafe had a concave roof and after a rain they used to pump water out of it. The prettiest waitresses were herded to the cafe from the whole region and caviar, fruit and other delicacies were urgently brought in. For some reason, however, the visitors never came to see the cafe: the girls were allowed to go home and the food returned where it had been: the regional party committee canteen.

All this was no news for Soviet people. Actually, all Soviets have experienced something like this in their lives, but usually the indignation degenerates into grumbling or telling jokes about the leaders. That time, however, the people's indignation began mounting. It was then that Khrushchev came to the city and there was no Nehru around. Khrushchev fancied addressing the people at a massive meeting. The local bosses tried to talk him out of it, but Khrushchev liked to chat with the people so much!

People were herded to the meeting by party committees, they were the usual lot: advanced workers, Party activists, etc. The local authorities must have felt that something was seriously wrong and were cautious enough to deploy troops to reinforce the local police and KGB. The troops were deployed in lanes around the square where the meeting was to take place.

When Khrushchev appeared on the rostrum, the hum of the crowd became louder, catcalls and whistles were heard. Khrushchev's speech was interrupted, he forgot about the mike and asked the city bosses: "What kind of hooligans are these?" – and the whole square could hear him ask that! Catcalls and whistles intensified. Khrushchev tried to say something, but was escorted from the rostrtum to safety. The meeting was ordered to disperse, the troops moved in and started channelling people, pressing them out of the square. Many people were hurt in the rush. After these developments selling of beer was absolutely forbidden in Kuibyshev cafes.

* * *

Living in the Soviet Union one sometimes discovers facts revealing the hatred immanent in the ruling regime. Such facts include psychiatric repressions against dissidents, deployment of troops and tanks against peaceful demonstrators, etc...

A colonel who stirs up trouble

The emergence of a new parliamentary faction – Communists for Democracy, was one of the sensations of the Third Congress of People's Deputies of Russia

The leader of the new faction, Hero of the Soviet Union Colonel **Alexander RUTSKOI,** answers questions put to him by *NEW TIMES*

Had you planned your sensational declaration before the congress?

The idea first came to me at the previous congress. Then I grew indignant at the stance of the leaders of Kommunisty Rossii (Communists of Russia, the hard liners' faction in the parliament of the Russian Federation) who started speaking up against already endorsed amendments the first day after these amendments had been included in the Constitution of Russia. I talked to some Communist-MPs and suggested they quit the faction, but I got no response. Recently I have spoken with these people and they liked the idea. A number of deputies joined Communsits for Democracy – in a couple of days our membership reached 179 people. Later, when we started checking the membership lists and asking members to add their signatures to the list, the number dropped to 98. Some deputies withdrew from the faction after they were brainwashed by Communsits of Russia.

Your faction is said to unite non-CP people as well...

That's true, and there are a few such people in our faction. I have a separate list of 16 people's deputies who turned in their party cards but who agree with my statement and are willing to participate in our faction's efforts.

What will the new faction be like?

It will be a parliamentary faction supporting initiatives coming from broad popular masses. We have set up a working group to work out our rules and programme. The working group is composed of scientists, industrial and other workers, chairpersons and members of the Supreme Soviet of Russia, even some members of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. We are not going to found any new Communist party. Personally, I favour an officially registered socio-political organization which would enjoy the status of a juridical person and have the right to cooperate with other socio-political movements. I receive many letters and telegrams. Some 25,000 people have already said they would like to join such an organization at the same time remaining members of the CPSU.

Will yours be an organization for rank-and-file CP members?

So far no regional or district party secretary has joined my faction. But we do have many representatives of the executive branches on the level of regions and districts. This is an indicative fact. Just look through the lists of roll-call voting and you'll see that party secretaries almost always oppose any democratic changes in society. They are driven by the fear that they may lose power. They call themselves the party for the social protection of labour. But what is this social protection worth if members of Communists of Russia oppose the will of the people, as they did at the congress?

Do you think your activity may result in a split in the Communist Party?

I don't think so. I favour a democratic renovation of the CPSU. The CPSU in its present form is not a party of the people. It only conveys the will of the ruling party elite. The party needs democratic reforms if it is to survive.

Do you think you may have to break away from the CPSU if all attempts to reform the latter prove to be yet another utopia?

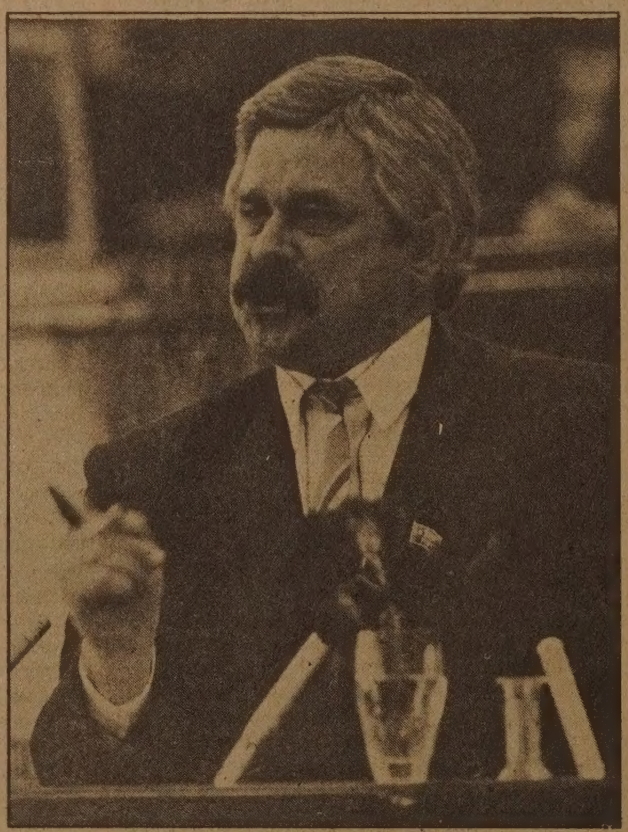
I am a soldier... I believe that first one should act, do something and then one should reflect in which direction to progress. There are many honest, decent Communists – workers, peasants and intellectuals who do not make decisions or hold important positions inside the CP. I am one of them and I want to promote their interests. By parliamentary means, of course. That is why I believe we need a communist faction in parliament.

What is your idea of withdrawing the Army, the KGB and other state bodies from party control?

Eventually, they will be withdrawn from party control, but one must not force the process. The final departization will be a logical outcome of the decision to allow multiparty system in this country.

I do not think the leaders of the Communist Party of Russia approve of your activities... Don't you fear they may expel you from the CPSU?

"One does not go against one's conscience, that's what I say. As for the possibility of my being expelled, I joined the CPSU, not the CPR and it is the CPSU alone that can expel me. We will set up our own socio-



Rutskoi's temperamental speech gave rise to reactions not only at the congress...

Photo by Dmitry Sokolov

ABOUT MYSELF

Dispatched to work at the Supreme Soviet...

Alexander Rutskoi

I was born in 1947 into the family of a soldier. Father was a tankman who fought throughout the war and died two months ago at the age of 67. My grandfather was also a soldier. Father was a CPSU member for 47 years and my grandfather – for 52 years. Thre were three sons in the family: I am a colonel now, my brother Vladimir is a major in the Air Force and my younger brother Mikhail graduated from the Interior Ministry Academy and is currently employed as a criminal investigation officer in Kursk. I joined a pilots' club when I was in the ninth form. After school I spent a year working as a fitter at an aircraft plant. Then I joined the army and studied at Barnaul Air Force College. I served in the town of Borisoglebsk and later graduated from an Air Force Academy. After graduation I was dispatched to serve in the Soviet army group deployed in Germany. In 1984 it was proposed to me that I form a regiment equipped with the latest aircraft. The officers of my regiment were all young boys fresh from Air Force colleges but in about a year I managed to make good pilots out of them.

In 1985 our regiment was deployed in Afghanistan. Ours was the only regiment where not a single pilot was killed. In was the only regiment which started nighttime fighting in the montainous terrain. Ironically and stupidly, the regiment was disbanded.

I was appointed the CO of another regiment which was poorly trained. We lost seven pilots in three months... Then my plane was downed near Jawar, I was wounded in the arm and I broke my spine. After hospital, they would not allow me any more flying and appointed me deputy CO of the Pilots' Training Centre in Lipetsk. In 1988 I agreed to return to Afghanistan in the position of deputy commander of the Air Force of the 40th Army.

In 1988 the enemy started getting surface-to-surface missiles and bombarding our garrisons with them. I formed a squadron of attack planes and handpicked the best pilots to man it I was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, the intelligence said I was a hunted man. Finally, Pakistani Air Force F-16 fighters got me over Khost, and the winds carried me into Pakistan. I tried to escape for five days, shooting at my pursuers. Then I was wounded and captured. I spent in captivity a month and a half. Eventually, they exchanged me. You can see I am a robust man, but after the exchange I weighed only 48 kilograms.

Then I become a graduate with honours of the General Staff Academy. When I was running for People's Deputy of the USSR, my contenders from the democratic camp called me a fascist whose hands were elbow-deep in blood. I lost the campaign then, but I do not hold any grudge against the democrats. Some people tell me today that I should not cooperate with the democrats after what they had said about me. But how long can we go on fighting one another?

I did not retire from the Armed Forces after I was elected People's Deputy of the Russian Federation. I was dispatched at the disposal of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation and I chair one of the Supreme Soviet committees."

political organization, and if they expel any of our members, we will reelect those members ourselves.

You are the chairman of one of the Supreme Soviet's committees. What are its responsibilities?

Initially, our committee was charged with the affairs of servicemen and their families. Then they added the problems of Afghan war veterans, WW2 veterans, labour vbeterans, invalids. Thus practically all socially unprotected people became our responsibility. You wouldn't believe things we read in letters and complaints addressed to our committee! People don't have enough money to live on, nothing to wear, nowhere to sleep. Invalids can't get wheelchairs, to say nothing of convenient flats! And we call this outrage an achievement of socialism! We have received 45,000 complaints and helped satisfy many of them.

What is your family's attitude to your poiltical activity?

My older son is 19 and my younger son 17. They are both men of conviction. My wife and my sons support me and share my conviction that lack of responsibility and the absence of a good state management system have brought us to the verge of ruin. The CP has a good slogan: all party members from the grassroots up have to report about and be responsible for what they do. Actually, however, there is nothing of the kind. We favour rigid control and accountability of all party and state leaders, irrespective of their ranks.

Are you a member of the Central Committee of the CPR?

Ivan Polozkov talked to me once and suggested that I nominate myself for Central Committee membership. I refused flatly and did not even attend the congress. After the congress *Sovietskaya Rossiya* published my name on the list of the newly-elected Central Committee members. First I tried to explain I did not want to be elected, but now I do not regret being included in the CC. After all, trouble-makers like me have to be on that Central Committee.

Did Polozkov talk to you after you announced you would crate a new faction?

"No, he didn't. Moreover, many of the Polozkov entourage stopped talking to me. I get a lot of telegrams: some people approve of my demarche, some don't. But one telegram was indeed remarkable: I got it next morning after my declaration. It said that people of the kolkhoz named after May Day condemned me for what I had done. How could this have been possible? The broadcast from the congress ended after midnight, how could they have had enough time to assemble to pass a resolution of condemnation and then make their way through the village mud to send the telegram to me?

...Man must be really free, man must have the right to develop freely, to live the life he chooses. Free people are good workers. They don't need slogans, they don't need socialist emulation, they don't need to be told not to drink vodka or stay away from work. Free people do things right when doing things right makes sense.

***Interviewer* Gennady Arlyevich**

March 28, Moscow. While confrontation throughout the world lessens, at home it grows

Photo by Dmitry Borko

"Is the army defending itself?"

"The Marshal is angry? Then the Marshal is in the wrong." After the article thus headed carried in our journal, Marshal Akhromeyev proposed getting together at our editorial offices for a face-to-face debate. Present were our editor-in-chief Alexander Pumpyansky, news analyst Evgeny Rusakov and Sergei Rogov, D.Sc. (Hist.)

From the issue of security and the external threat the discussion switched to the issue of the army and domestic politics.

A. Pumpyansky. When you debated the matter of interference in our internal affairs, which should be resisted, you began by noting that James Baker favoured free enterprise.

S. Akhromeyev. What James Baker said was not about free enterprise, but about the current situation here in this country. Let me quote what he said once again: In the USSR, he said, we observe a return to centralized economy, a less free press, broader powers for the army and the KGB, and the resignation or retirement from the government of the principal advocates of reform. He said that the USA could not accept all that. In other words, when interpreting our reality in his own fashion he listed what Yeltsin and others do not like today. In his view, these actions by the Soviet Union's highest bodies of power are incompatible with the policy of peaceful reform here. I have no intention of mooting the issue because that is, in effect, of little use. He should not have said that in principle.

A.P. I too do not like what James Baker listed. True, one may discuss how appropriate such opinions are coming from the head of the foreign policy office. Only why should the military, the army draw inferences from that? It's the politicians who should draw the conclusions. You qualify that as ideological interference. Suppose that is so. So you, as I take it, proceed from the premise that you as the army should apparently oppose interference. But how? Why should the army generally reply to ideological contradictions?

S.A. I implied not "ideological interference," but intervention in our domestic affairs, which is of a different order. When the US Secretary of State qualifies the situation in my country and advises how it should act, then, begging your pardon, any Soviet citizen, civilian or military, is entitled to say what he thinks on that score.

A.P. The question is not one of views and opinions, but of military policy.

S.A. It wasn't I who started by talking about what James Baker said. I can give you one more illustration which concerns the Baltics. Of course, it is for the USA to say whether to recognize the entry of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia into the Soviet Union in 1940 or not. However, does US policy complicate the situation in the

The first part of this discussion was featured in No. 14, 1991

Soviet Union or not? It does, and seriously so. The said stance is more than simply a declaration. There are facts when US citizens, even civil servants, operate in Lithuanian territory against USSR interests. How is a Soviet citizen to treat the matter of a US civil servant directing the erection of barricades around parliament in Lithuania? I think that impermissible, that that complicates Soviet-American relations.

A.P. The job of identifying foreigners on our barricades here at home is the concern of the police and KGB. It would be enough for an officer of the rank of major to cope with the situation you invoke. At any rate this has no bearing at all upon the army and problems of military policy.

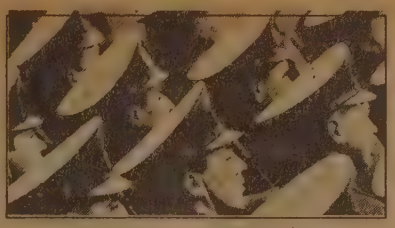
Let us look at the matter in its broader perspective. When a soldier says he is defending his Fatherland, that is natural and normal. But how is one to take it when soldiers say they are defending our socialist values? People may believe in communism, in free enterprise or in God. That is all the world of ideas. One may uphold the world of ideas only by means of ideas. What place does that leave for the army? You say the army guards the socialist choice. I would like you to explain your views on that score.

S.A. I shall now try to answer.

Firstly. Today our society is of a multiparty character. The army has no right to interfere in disputes between the different parties. That is something the army understands and has taken to heart. On the other hand, the Armed Forces uphold the values recorded in our Constitution. That is their obligation and duty.

The attitude to the USSR Constitution in our society varies. Some say it is obsolete, others find it quite appropriate. However, that is of no concern to the soldier. He has sworn the oath of allegiance to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and it behooves him to guard the operative USSR Constitution. In conformity with Article 31 the Armed Forces of the USSR are mandated to protect the integrity of our country. Which is thrown in particular relief nowadays, when on March 17 the majority of the Soviet people voted for a united, renovated Soviet Union. In the case of anyone encroaching upon the integrity of our country, it behooves the army to defend the Fatherland from such secessionist actions. It is necessary for all to know that. But how? It is not for the army to define that. The related decisions are adopted by the Congress of People's Deputies, the USSR Supreme Soviet, and the USSR President.

Secondly. Our social system is a socialist one. Which is likewise recorded in the USSR Constitution. A certain segment of our society dislikes the socialist system. In that case let these folk seek to amend the USSR Constitution. Provided the Constitution is amended by the established procedure, provided the statement about socialist society is withdrawn, the situation changes... However, thus far the Armed Forces must uphold the socialist choice. That is their constitutionally mandated obligation. While that is constitutionally declared, the soldier will defend it.



Who is embroiling the army in politics?

Today the USSR Constitution has become, begging your pardon, a bone in the throat of the secessionists and the "new democrats." No wonder they behave as if the USSR Constitution is nonexistent. They try to ignore it. However, it lives and is operative.

The army is alleged to be interfering in Lithuania's affairs. That is not true. On March 11, 1990, Lithuania's Supreme Soviet declared the USSR Constitution inactive on Lithuanian territory. However, Soviet troops are stationed in the Lithuanian Soviet Republic. They are guided by the USSR Constitution. So who, may I ask, is provoking the confrontation? Lithuania's leadership is doing that.

Further. Promulgated in Lithuania are laws discriminating against the officer corps and their families. Should these laws be repealed, the army will withdraw to the barracks and will not be in evidence. However, Lithuania's leadership refuses to repeal them because it seeks confrontation. Lithuania's leaders fear the normal constitutional process for the republic's withdrawal from the USSR

S.Rogov. No discrimination against servicemen can be tolerated at all. However, many are worried when the internal function of the Armed Forces becomes confrontation between the army and the population. Not infrequently this confrontation is provoked by extremist forces seeking thereby to score points. Nevertheless, it is obvious that when social accord is upset, constitutional law and order must not be restored by employing armed force. The thesis that in foreign policy armed force must not be used as a means to accomplish political goals, is a hundred times more valid in relation to domestic policy.

S.A. I disagree that the Armed Forces must not be used to restore constitutional law and order. That sort of attitude is nothing but hypocrisy, craftiness. The Constitution must not be trampled underfoot. The country's laws must not be turned into nothing but a sheet of paper. With us that is happening everywhere. Only given observance of the Constitution and the other laws of the country, only given normal parliamentary activity, will society develop without violence.

While society was monolithic no internal functions emerged for the army to discharge. However, society has split, and forces have appeared that seek, in contravention of the USSR Constitution, to dismember the country by means of mob violence and political chicanery, to change the social and state system by force, though it enjoys the support of the people as the referendum has demonstrated. Yeltsin declares that the USSR President should be removed, that the authority granted him by the USSR Constitution be transferred to the Council of the Federation. That represents an anti-constitutional method for abolishing state authority. That represents an attack on the USSR Constitution. This declaration has excited the country. It has generated an extremely acute situation within the state. The army has also expressed its disapproval of this statement.

When the social process proceeds within the framework of the USSR Constitution, the Armed Forces do not interfere in any way. But when political struggle transcends the Constitution, the Army and Navy undertake in line with the decisions of the highest state bodies to uphold the Constitution.

A.P. I think your opponents could easily dispute some of the points you make. Defence of the Constitution is not a bad argument, but it is not total, not only because it is absolutely plain that our society deserves a better constitution and will have a new Constitution rather shortly. You say that if the line related to the socialist choice be deleted tomorrow, the army will immediately stop upholding the socialist choice. But if today the army covers that questionable altar in blood, do you think that on the morrow the army's conscience, the conscience of our citizens wearing military uniform, will be clean?

To be frank, I'm afraid that that is all rhetoric. Only recently it was said that, "The army is the Party's vanguard!" Today it is as fervently argued that "The army is upholding the Constitution!" I would not place the sign of equality between the two concepts of the defence of the Fatherland and the defence of the Constitution. They are by no means one and the same. I personally detest when anything is fetishisized. After all, in our far from law-governed state the Constitution may be defended in such a manner, that nothing of the state will be left except the Constitution. By use of armed force in Tbilisi, it was supposedly hoped to endorse Union logic, but what actually eventuated was that the last threads were snapped and the people

were prodded beyond the limits, which is what we are currently having to face both in the "centre" and in the republic.

I would like our argument to be concerned more with the substance of the thing that the talk. The Stalin Constitution which Bukharin wrote, though a highly democratic one, masked the worst of dictatorships. That violation of the Constitution is regrettable cannot be disputed. However, Stalin turned the Stalin Constitution into a scrap of paper. Brezhnev along with his cronies emasculated the Brezhnev Constitution. Did the army then stick up for those constitutional values of the freedom of speech and the right of nations to self-determination? Only General Grigorenko did that.

Is the Constitution the Fundamental Law? It is, but only in a normal, that is democratic, civilized state. But with us it has always been at every level that the Fundamental Law is what a Party or other boss said even in a whisper, not at all the Constitution. If we are to recognize the army's interference or the use of the army in a domestic political process as normal then the state will never become normal. One may be quite sure of that.

Your opponent will likewise contest another point you make. You say that the opponents are calling for the resignation of the President or the Prime Minister. In our domestic market of ideas that sounds menacing. But if you were to say that to any other person in the West, he wouldn't understand what you were driving at. Political opponents are entitled to criticize any official, to call for change, naturally appealing to the electorate. On the other hand, should some gang of conspirators, some committee of salvation clandestinely plan some sort of action, the more so by drawing upon the Armed Forces, that would undoubtedly constitute a crime, and the state's punitive arm must be directed against that crime.

S.A. You take our Constitution in too lightminded a fashion. For you the socialist social system is but a "line," but for me it spells the seventy years of our people's life and struggle. You may disagree, but I am stating my view. Today there are three venues of struggle being conducted by anti-constitutional means.

The first venue is spearheaded against the highest bodies of state authority. This is expressed in the demand to dissolve the Congress of People's Deputies, disband the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet, relieve the U.S.S.R. President of his duties, and remove the Union government. This fight is being waged against the lawfully elected highest bodies of power. Parliamentary methods are replaced by mob anarchy. But one step remains to the use of force.

The second venue is the furious struggle conducted against the CPSU. I intently analyze it. For me besides the start of the war in 1941 and Chernobyl, the direst period in life was 1988, when the CPSU was assailed from every quarter. Clandestine activity was undertaken to arode it, and subsequently abolish it. Moreover, this was done from both outside and inside. We have yet to discover how this took place and who organized it.

The third venue of political struggle is what certain forces are doing to demoralize the army and the navy. But about that later.

A.P. Though everything you say has a most menacing ring, for some reason I don't wish to feel scared. For instance, you trot out the bogey of a change in the regime. But what does that imply? Didn't the regime change in 1985? At any rate I, for one, would not like to think we have the same regime as we did under Chernenko and Brezhnev.

Actually the issue is of quite a different order. You have a political struggle which should be conducted exclusively by political and, desirably, civilized means. I absolutely detest the way political struggle is developing in this country of ours. There is so much stupidity and so much boorishness from different sides, from the right, from the left, from everywhere. I'm afraid the public can put many a demanding claim to practically every prominent personality on our stage. We of course need to become civilized, although that will scarcely occur in the space of a year let alone, a month. However there is one standard of conduct which whether we like it or not, we must necessarily acknowledge as unshakeable. That is no invention of bourgeois democracy or a Western stratagem.

The army stands outside of politics. The army must not be an implement of politics. Armed people must not be involved in the political struggle. The gun is by no means a political argument. The man with the gun is always right. Still more so, the man with the tommy gun.

However, today many are coming to think that with us the army is embroiled in the political process. It is not the men who serve, not the citizens in uniform, but the army as an institution. I don't like the organized demonstrations coming from the army. That is wrong.

S.A. I have no intention of trying to scare you. Don't ascribe to me what I didn't say. I did not tell you of any change of regime. What I did say was about attempts to change the state system in our country by force. That is what Yeltsin called for. He has not only called for that, he has also been working for that. Further. We have veered away from the subject. I was talking about unconstitutional methods of struggle, while you have been speaking about parliamentary methods. You have changed the theme.

A.P. Not at all. What changes is when political struggle is transformed into armed struggle, into punitive action. To make everything absolutely plain, I must say I'm not averse to a pro-army demonstration. That is a matter for citizens. What I am against is a demonstration by troops as that is no

longer a political demonstration, but a military parade. The army may certainly have its pressure groups, its eloquent advocates, its ideologues, if you please. But when an armoured column rolls out into the streets and troops seize a television tower, that is already overthrowing politics, trampling social norms and rights underfoot. In a society that seeks to be civilized, the argument that the "army is defending itself" is unethical. The army cannot defend itself, as that is dangerous self-service.

Does the threat exist of a military coup?

S.A. For three years running now, it has been dinned away that the Armed Forces are hatching a coup and may effect a takeover. Who says this? You keep mum out of courtesy, but I will say straight out that this is said by Yeltsin, Sobchak and Arbatov. These claims are a deliberate untruth. Who really is embroiling the army in the political process? These folk naught else. To what end? To embroil the army and navy in the political struggle, isolate the generals and senior officers from the rest of the armed forces and try to bring over to their side at least part of the army. Is that ethical?

As for punitive operations, you are guilty of an untruth. The army has never conducted and does not conduct any punitive operations whatever. You are displeased that the army is defending itself. In that case look at the matter from the other side, have political provocation and speculation against the armed forces stop. As citizens of the U.S.S.R., soldiers are entitled to uphold their honour and dignity. I have come here neither with a revolver or the tommy gun you mention, but with your own weapon, that of the spoken word. I think I am behaving normally. If only others would cope with their differences as we are.

I have been with the army for 51 years now and have been brought up to respect the leadership of the state, the Constitution and our society (all commanding officers of the Armed Forces are reared in this spirit). Whence the accusation levelled of a military take-over? Does the threat of such a take-over really exist? Why are such pronouncements made? Are these methods of conducting struggle against the Armed Forces? They cannot be tolerated at all.

That provocation fell through only to be succeeded by another – that a dictatorship is in the offing. Whose dictatorship? Somebody is inflaming the situation.

E. Rusakov. True enough, spokesmen for a definite part of society are apprehensive as to the danger of a military take-over and the institution of a dictatorship. My interpretation is that what they have in mind is not the advent to power of a home-grown Bonaparte, Pinochet or Kornilov. Implied is the probability of an attempt by certain political forces or some influential extra-constitutional personality to turn back the clock of democratization and social reform, by relying on the military who are now so actively involved in the country's political life. Do you think such talk has nothing at all in common with reality?

A.P. One may also conceive the scenario of a "creeping coup" with the military pressuring the U.S.S.R. President to curtail reform and use the army as a powerful independent political force thereby to exert such pressure conjointly with other forces adhering to similar views.

S.A. I can't understand why these, what you term "certain political forces" or some "extra-constitutional personality" will seek to rely on the military. Currently such personalities – and that is a reality – rely on other forces.

By energetnically participating in the struggle against the anti-army drive, the military are protecting the army and navy from destruction, which is being effected by Arbatov, the magazine Ogonyok and some others. Those are forces seeking to implement a "creeping coup" by means of militant demonstrations and political strikes: they want to change the state system of our country by force.

Far from everyone may rely on the Armed Forces. Only those whom the Armed Forces obey in line with the U.S.S.R. Constitution. No social forces may rely on the army and navy. For some reason you are chary about naming these forces.

A.P. You mean such army tradition as implicit loyalty to the Political Bureau.

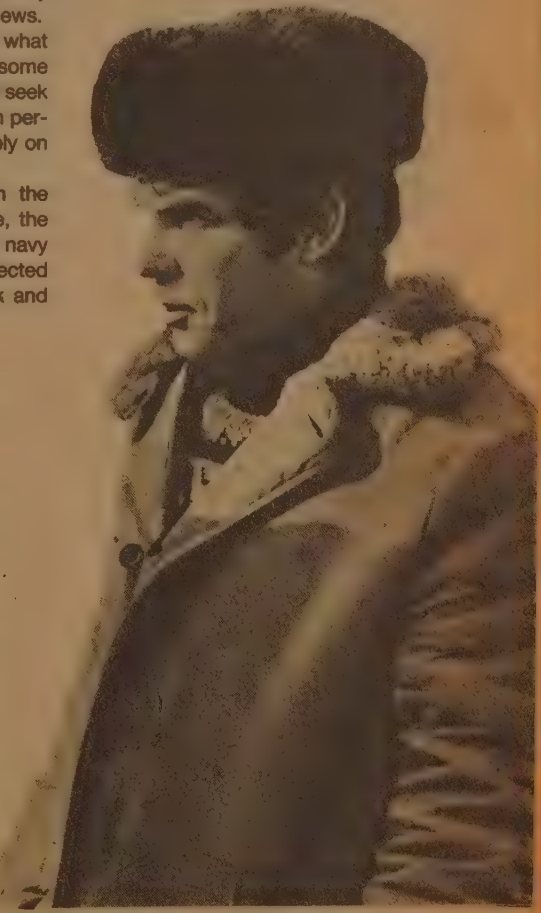
S.A. I mean respect. Before the Political Bureau was the supreme authority. Now this respect relates to the highest bodies of state power.

A.P. We see the processes taking place in the CPSU's top echelons. Many think, for instance, that the CPSU is swinging to the Right. I'm afraid it is already time to speak of the CPSU on the platform of the Russian Federation Communist Party.

What struck the eye first was the difference between Gorbachev's pragmatic approach in his political and state actions and Polozkov's views. Let us imagine, although now that conjecture would seem not that topical, that the Political Bureau will make up its mind and say that Gorbachev has gone too far in his reforms, in his closer relations with the West, in his boat-rocking, that his policy is serving to split the Union and that no wonder Yakovlev and Gorbachev inspired Lithuania to secede.

S.A. We should not place these leaders side by side. The emergence of the Lithuanian problem, if provided we seek only subjective causes, is the upshot of Yakovlev's blundering.

A.P. That's what you think. Others think otherwise. At any rate that is an ideological, political issue, which relates not to personalities, but to the nature of the process.



At this point the Political Bureau resolves that the matter must stop here and naturally appeals to the army, as if saying, "Help us, comrades!" In keeping with the good old seventy-year-long traditions, they say that we must save the Fatherland, that we must save the socialist choice! So will we?

S.A. I cannot agree with what you say about the situation in the CPSU and the Central Committee Political Bureau. Here our opinions are diametrically opposed. What you call "The CPSU on the platform of the Russian Federation Communist Party," is an attempt to set two leading party bodies at loggerheads. For what purpose? The CPSU and its componential Russian Federation Communist Party comprise the political force that is implementing perestroika under Gorbachev's leadership. It comprises the backbone of the Centre, in other words is the political force upon which the U.S.S.R. President relies.

The suppositions you voice as to the CPSU's possible actions, in which process you name some of the leaders, remain your suppositions and I will not discuss them. Today the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee does not command the Armed Forces and cannot issue any instructions to them.

When you speak of democracy, you insistently proceed from the premise of a firmly established democracy. Then guarantee the country a normal situation and respect for its Armed Forces. Insofar as you lay claims to the army, that with arms in hand it is defending the people in interethnic conflicts, then do away with these conflicts. See to it that Armenians not kill Azerbaijanians, that Azerbaijanians not kill Armenians, so that paratroops not be alerted and dispatched to the area of conflict. After all, sent there, begging your pardon, are not you, but troops.

In your claims you proceed from a theoretical democracy, which we do not have in this country. I, on the contrary, proceed from the really obtaining state of society and the army's role in our society, not from some model democracy. I would like to hear what you have to say about that problem. How odd: you only criticize and dislike everything, but do not propose anything concrete.

Osh, Kirghizia. Though the army cannot arbitrate in interethnic conflicts, more often now is it compelled to rush to the rescue *TASS photo*

The army does not operate of its own volition anywhere. You mention Tbilisi. Take the conclusion the U.S.S.R. Procurator's Office has drawn in connection with the events in Tbilisi. It says who was to blame. The army is not to blame for the Tbilisi events. We had the following procedure for doing things: with the Political Bureau as the supreme body of state power. The Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and the Bureau of the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party decided to have the troops act.

A.P. I will agree that the army has good ground for discontent – not only as regards every-day conditions, but as regards politics as well.

Let us take those Tbilisi events. We shall not discuss how the army conducted itself there. Yet, it is plain that the army did not go there of its own accord. It stands to reason that Rodionov was given the appropriate order. It stands to reason that these decisions were taken at top political levels, by the Political Bureau. The men who took the decisions, not the soldiers, not even the general, should be counted as primarily culpable. What should be blamed is the system, the regime, the method of power. Even though the claims put in that respect are at a low profile, Ogonyok is to be blamed for conducting an anti-army line. On the other hand, the men who made the army bear the brunt in Tbilisi and in Baku are not even named.

Again, in what you say I notice a certain shift of emphasis. You say, and this impresses me that we civilians including us three in particular should ensure observance of the Constitution, mature democracy and so on, in which case you, the army would retire to the barracks. However, I must say that the three of us can ensure only more or less ethical journalism in New Times. You can put so sweeping a claim only to society as a whole or at least to the powers-that-are.

S.A. Yet you already put claims to the army.

A.P. I won't argue that, as what I want to have is law and order, democracy and human rights secured to our society. Only these claims are not put by the military to civilians. They are, if you please, overall claims to the regime, to our esteemed leadership. Whatever the case, all these claims, problems and contradictions must necesssarily be resolved by political means.

You mention the three principles on which Soviet foreign policy rests to wit: demilitarization, democratization and deideologization. Do these three "de's" refer to army policy at home? May the army take offence at the people, the state, or democracy be it even underdeveloped? May the army assume a political role?

True, the Constitution is imperfect and society is enmeshed in a tangle of contradictions. May the army assume the role of a constitutional courft, of construer of the Constitution? May the army pass judgement in the realm of ideas? May it decide what the socialist choice implies? It pronounces the verdict and itself carries it out without delay.

S.A. You again raise the issue of an independent political role for the Armed Forces in society. Yet, to react to what the forces waging an anti-army drive are doing and repulse these forces still does not imply assuming a political role. The army does not play such a role. Of its own accord it de-

cides nothing. It does not claim a political role in society.

You mention Lithuania's committee of national salvation. Why didn't you refer to the Supreme Soviet of Lithuania, which overnight. "withdrew from the Soviet Union"? Does that conform to the Constitution? Then you should place side by side at least these anti-constitutional actions of Lithuania's Supreme Soviet and the self-same committee. Why did that committee emerge? Because of the secessionist policy that Landsbergis and the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet unlawfully conduct!

S.R. The army does discharge a domestic function. True enough, when one set of citizens kill another set of citizens, the army is obliged to intervene and bear blows from both sides. However, should the army itself formulate its stand on one or another political issue, the country will be heading them not towards democratization, but towards a regime akin to the type existing in several Latin American and Middle Eastern countries.

S.A. Let me repeat that our army has never adopted and is not adopting the stance of a political force in society. Its declared obligation is to protect the Constitution and our values and it obeys the supreme bodies of state authority.

S.R. You say that the army agrees or that the army does not agree. What does that mean? Or you say the army declares this or that. Who does that mean? The defence minister? Or the Chief of Staff? Who speaks in the name of the army?

S.A. It stands to reason that they speak in the name of the Armed Forces, the Minister, the Chief of Staff, the military MPs and other servicemen airing their views in the press but already on their own behalf. When the Army and Navy have political accusations levelled against them – such as a plot, a take over and the like – they accordingly react. You wish to know who they personally are? They are Yazov, Moiseyev and Akhromeyev. But as the anti-army campaign is continuing, Petrushenko and Alksnis have also appeared on the scene. Yes that is so. Action provokes reaction. When you have accusers on the one hand, defenders appear on the other. If political speculation and disruptive efforts continue against the Army and Navy, we shall see Ivanovs, Petrovs and

May the army discharge the role of a constitutional court?

Sidorovs also appearing. They will not allow the Armed Forces to be slighted. It is time to end the anti-army campaign.

S.R. There is a difference between what Petrushenko and Akhromeyev say and what Alksnis and Yazov say. Does exacerbation of political struggle within the armed forces really conform to democratic standards of behaviour? I think it not right when on every issue an independent stand is taken by men who at one and the same time are professional politicians and yet hold office in the army.

S.A. The different views and attitudes and the sharpening political struggle are observed primarily around the Armed Forces not inside the Armed Forces. The forces already mentioned are responsible. Your initial reason for raising the issue of military MPs derives from the circumstance that the flare-up of the political power struggle in society is due to unconstitutional methods. What is the army to do when at stake is its own lot and the lot of the Fatherland? The army naturally will not hold aloof from the effort to resolve such matters. After all, should the issue be one of the Homeland's integrity and the process be ungovernable, and should attempts be made to dismember the country by force, who then would hold aloof?

A.P. At any rate, thanks. I think we have gone into the matter in sufficient detail. However one sad remark.

The second half of our talk about the army's domestic functions in the U.S.S.R. has taken up more space than the first half, where we dealt with the problems of external security. I'm afraid that in real life too we see the same tilt, with the domestic function tipping the scales. That is dangerous. If we are to proceed from the premise that our state, our society can stay afloat only with the help of the army, that shows that the disease is incurable.

My second remark is somewhat more optimistic. When proposing this debate you, I think proceeded involuntarily or not, from the surmise that you were dealing with opponents, who exploiting their editorial advantages would endeavour to chalk up more points, even take up more space. No wonder, you so insistently emphasize that it is essential to have parity in a dialogue, quite like the parity at talks with the Americans. Hopefully you have now seen for yourself that we prefer to preach the principle of rational adequacy. That your line occupies more space does not at all embarrass us. In the final analysis we invited you to listen to your argument. True, some may say: "The Marshal unquestionably wants parity, but a parity when he will have one and a half times or so more tanks or lines." I'm afraid I'll not be able to offer any objection to that.

At any rate, we have furnished our readers with what we must give, to wit information and the opportunity of comparing positions on this vital issue.

S.A. Our society holds on not by means of armed force. It possesses a vast potential of other forces, which will extricate it from the crisis and place society on a healthy footing. The Army and the Navy will help in this important task. As regards our discussion, I have nothing to be either sad or happy about. We conducted an ideological controversy ethically on an equal footing. Thank you for giving me the chance to fully state my views. What we have as upshot though is that while my views are known, i.e. that I am for a united federal Union and the socialist choice, you have not expounded your own views. Which is a pity.

A.P. You think we haven't? I do not think our readers stand in great need of pompous declarations from us. Our views as regards these and other issues are to be found in each new issue even though far from everything printed reflects our real views. As a matter of fact, they are not at all identical. I would say if you don't mind, that our choice is the freedom of choice. We try not to confuse open minds with conformity.

Thank you once again for having come here with the "weapon of words," although I must admit I prefer one of these two words more than the other.

Drawing by Victor Bogorad

The editors invite readers to contribute to this forum on the topic of the Army and Society.

Toshiki Kaifu:

"I want to believe in my dream"

The Prime Minister of Japan answers questions put to him by our correspondent

"Soviets, Americans and Japanese all seem alike to extraterrestrial beings in UFOs, because we all are natives of the planet Earth." This statement was made by Japan's Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu about three years ago, when a Japanese magazine asked him what he thought about unidentified flying objects.

What is the connection between UFOs and a serious politician? Well, any politician is first of all a human being, and man is in the habit of dreaming. A dream is also entertained by Toshiki Kaifu, who is destined to become the first leader in the history of Japanese-Russian relations to shake hands with the leader of our state on the soil of the Land of the Rising Sun.

The present location of stars seems favourable to relations between the USSR and Japan. Since we use astral terminology, let us take notice of some unusual coincidences.

There is such a party

The Prime Minister shows an interest in unidentified flying objects. I learned about this with surprise from Tokuo Moriwaki, president of the Japanese UFO party. Incidentally, Moriwaki and his party are known in the Soviet Union. Mr. Moriwaki showed me dozens of letters sent by UFO enthusiasts from various towns and villages in our country.

– "I am very glad that the Soviet people show a keen interest in the observation and study of UFOs," Moriwaki said. "Your country is one of the leaders in this field. Moreover, research is conducted by scientists and specialists. Unfortunately, in

Japan problems of UFOs are now studied only on the individual level. Specialists are only beginning to show an interest in UFOs, incidentally not without the influence of Soviet and American works."

Mr. Moriwaki showed me a copy of a letter written in 1983 by Toshiki Kaifu, then member of parliament from the Liberal Democratic Party, to one of the activists of his party. In this letter the future premier writes that he learned about UFOs and took a great interest in this problem in Moscow in 1967. In that year, Toshiki Kaifu, who attended a congress of International Labour Organization, stopped at the residence of the Japanese ambassador in the USSR. In the residence he heard an interesting story about UFOs from a prominent Japanese diplomat. Toshiki Kaifu became keen on UFOs. "You ask me whether I believe in UFOs," he wrote in a letter to the above-mentioned magazine. "I shall reply in this way: I want to believe in them very much, though I have never seen one. One must believe in a dream."

"I wanted very much to observe UFOs at least once," Kaifu wrote further. "Unfortunately, till now I have not been able to observe them. I tried to find UFOs in the mysterious sky over the Amundsen-Scott winter base in the Antarctic in December 1981. I peered into the evening sky over the shores of Guadalcanal Island in the South Pacific. I looked for a meeting with UFOs even in the Swiss town of Zermatt and even on the summit of Ayers Rock in Australia. This passion gives me pleasure. I hope that someday my dream will come true."

Messengers from other planets?

In November 1989, Mr. Kaifu, already Prime Minister, gave a brief interview to students of Waseda University, where he once studied himself. I saw a videotape recording of the interview. A student politely, but without any confusion, put questions to him. The Prime Minister told students about his profound interest not only in UFOs but also in space exploration. He demonstrated considerable knowledge in this field. "It can be assumed that UFOs are a sort of messengers from other planets. At least I like the idea," he said.

Here are a few questions and replies.

"The Soviet news agency TASS reports that several Soviet schoolchildren witnessed the landing of a UFO. What do you think about this?"

"I think that Soviet specialists and scientists really believe in the existence of unidentified flying objects," Kaifu replied.

"The Soviet Union has organizations engaged in the study of UFOs. Are there such organizations in Japan?"

"Japan does not have such organizations at a government level," the Premier replied.

"Are there plans to set up such an organization?"

"Well," Toshiki Kaifu replied, "if young people display a serious interest in similar phenomena, we should perhaps think of forming a UFO data-collecting group under the auspices of the Ministry of Education."

"You should meet with President Reagan, who has more than once mentioned extraterrestrials in his speeches. Aren't you going to ask for his opinion on this question?"

"Well, I shall try," the Premier replied with a smile.

It is not by chance that I quoted the last question here. The point is that during our conversation Tokuo Moriwaki suddenly said: "Do you know that Mr. Gorbachev also spoke about extraterrestrials?"

"When and where?" I asked with surprise.

"Please, here is Gorbachev's speech given at the International Forum for a Nuclear-Free World, for the Survival of Mankind, held in Moscow in 1987." I took the text and read a passage in which Mikhail Gorbachev mentions his meeting with President Reagan in Geneva.

President Reagan said that if the Earth were threatened with an attack by extraterrestrials, the USA and the USSR would probably join forces to repulse it. The Soviet leader replied in this way: "It is perhaps untimely to fear such an invasion, though a hypothesis of this kind cannot be disregarded. The nuclear threat is more real for

Drawing by Victor Kazachek

From our mailbag

■ The article "The Northern Territories: to cede or not to cede," published in *NT* No. 7 for this year is interesting in its original approach to this problem. However, the effect of the article is marred by the blunders committed by its author. The main question is what islands he writes about.

If the Northern Territories are in question, the Japanese view is evidently accepted and Japanese names must be used: Etorofu (Iturup), Kunashiri (Kunashir), Sikotan (Shikotan), the Habomai archipelago (islands of the Little Kuril range – Anuchin, Yuri, Zelenyi, Polonsky Isles and others – about ten islands all in all, including islands without a name).

If the magazine gives Soviet names, it is a question of two islands of the Kurils – Iturup and Kunashir and islands of the Little Kuril range.

One of the subheadings mentions "four islands of the South Kuril range." But neither Soviet nor Japanese maps have the South Kuril range.

ARKADY ZAMOSHCH,
member of the Presidium,
the Sakhalin Regional Soviet
of People's Deputies

YUZHNO-SAKHALINSK

earthmen, and we must jointly act to keep it away from our common home."

This thought obviously responds to Toshiki Kaifu's words quoted in the beginning of the article.

What Akiyama saw

An international symposium on space and UFOs was held last November in the city of Hakui, located in the Ishikawa prefecture. The Soviet Union was represented by Vladimir Azhazha, a noted specialist on UFOs, and test-pilot Marina Popovich. Among the organizers and sponsors of the symposium were the Soviet and American embassies in Japan. I got in touch by telephone with Mr. Shiotani, mayor of Hakui. "An interesting and profound discussion of the UFO problem took place in our city last year," he told me. "We were very glad to play host to this symposium. Speaking at its final sitting, I expressed the hope that it will become a sort of part one to be followed soon by part two. It is not known yet where the second part of the symposium will be held. If it takes place in your country, I will certainly come as a participant. I am a physician by profession. I studied natural sciences and, therefore, consider UFOs not only with immense interest but also as a specialist armed with scientific methods of research. Your representatives spoke at the symposium about joint international study of UFOs. I fully support this idea."

The symposium received two messages from Prime Minister Kaifu, who once again repeated his thought that we all are earthmen irrespective of our nationalities, and stressed the need of profoundly realizing this while entering the 21st century.

During Gorbachev's visit the Soviet Order of Friendship of the Peoples will be presented to Japan's cosmonaut Akiyama and his backup pilot Kikuchi.

Several days ago I tried to meet with Mr. Akiyama, but the cosmonaut-journalist was out of reach. Frankly speaking, I wanted to learn whether Akiyama saw UFO in space. His close colleagues and friends say that the cosmonaut flatly denies this rumour. Well, let us wait for his book, *The Great Space Travel*, to come out. In the headquarters of the UFO party I saw a video-taped report by Akiyama made on board the Mir complex. An object, changing its direction at an immense speed, did appear and disappear on the screen against the background of the blue planet.

The above stated coincidences and parallels of the Soviet-Japanese horoscope impelled me to apply directly to Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu. Though very busy in connection with his forthcoming visit to the United States and the forthcoming arrival of Mikhail Gorbachev, Mr. Kaifu found time to answer my three questions.

New Times. Mr. Prime Minister, do you still believe in your dream? Did you not lose interest in UFOs?

Toshiki Kaifu. I continue to take an interest in this problem. I believe in my dream and hope that it will come true one day.

N.T. Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev will arrive in Tokyo soon. In an interview at the Waseda University you promised to ask Ronald Reagan about extraterrestrials. I don't know whether you talked with him on this subject. Do you intend to raise the subject of space and UFOs in a conversation with the Soviet leader, especially considering that a Japanese cosmonaut is to be decorated with an order during the visit?

T.K. The flight of Mr. Akiyama on board a Soviet spaceship, his work on board the Mir station is a joint project of our two countries, a cause we can rightly be proud of. You know that when Mr. Akiyama was in space, the possibility of establishing communication between Tokyo and Moscow via space was studied. It was supposed that Mr. Gorbachev and I would be able simultaneously to talk with cosmonaut Akiyama and each other. To my regret, the circumstances connected with planning prevented the idea from being realized. But on April 16, Mr. Gorbachev will arrive in Japan and we shall be able to talk directly, not via space. It would be fine to implement the idea of a trilateral meeting, Gorbachev-Akiyama-Kaifu, at a distance of a stretched-out hand, not over thousands of miles. On his return from space Mr. Akiyama told me many interesting things about space, the USSR and Moscow. Some of the photographs brought by him hang on the wall near my office, and everyday I can talk to Mr. Gorbachev in my mind whom I consider for this reason a man I know very well and I look forward to meeting him with most friendly feelings.

N.T. Mr. Prime Minister, would you welcome the idea of setting up, say, an international centre for the study of UFOs with the participation of Japan, the USSR, the United States and other countries?

T.K. It would be a magnificent project. Without a thorough and correct knowledge of the past, it is impossible to see any prospect of further historical development. I think that from the standpoint of historical prospects, the exploration of space and the study of UFOs could become a subject of substantial international cooperation. Profound knowledge of space and of the still mysterious phenomena like UFOs can lay a good foundation for our joint, bright future. People in our country and in the Soviet Union show great interest in UFOs and space. For this reason I welcome as splendid the idea of carrying out such research on a global and, I would say, cosmic scale.

Let us believe in this dream. The peoples of various countries will surely find considerably more things which make them closer to one another than things which disunite them, and nothing can unite the people of the world stronger than the realization of their joint dream.

Vladimir Ovsyannikov,
our own correspondent

TOKYO

Mirror for humanity

"Do miracles happen?" Saint Augustin was asked.
"Yes, they do," the sage replied.
"The daily sunrise is a genuine miracle."

Back in the 1960s the famous Canadian scientist, Professor Marshall McLuhan, noted that the launching of a satellite made possible a "global theatre." Rock musicians were the first to realize this prophecy in the early 1980s by organizing delightful transatlantic telecasts Moscow-California-London-Philadelphia via space, thereby bringing the end of the Cold War nearer.

Perhaps today, in our troubled times, it would be a good idea to gather together and keep silent for several minutes. Perhaps it will bring nearer the hope for something better.

A similar project is being suggested for the first visit of the Soviet President to Japan – to organize the watching of the sunrise from an old observatory built on Malta over 5,000 years ago, by translating it simultaneously to all continents. Signals from various regions in which the sunrise is to be watched by public and religious figures, adults and children could be received during a press conference in a hall in which the Soviet leader will meet with journalists.

The Japanese corporations Mitsubishi and Sony have built large video screens and set them up on all continents. These screens can be linked by space TV bridges in a system called Mirror for Humanity. It is technically feasible to allow the people gathered in front of the screens – cells of the Mirror – to watch the sunrise and see themselves on other continents.

When the first sunray reaches the Malta observatory it will instantly be reflected by all cells of the Mirror. It will be night in some countries and twilight in others, but everywhere people, young and old, will watch the sunrise "on the fringe of the earth" and try to catch new streams of light with their eyes. It is a genuine miracle indeed.

In the process of a long coordination of technical and organizational questions including the watching of sunrise in "the natural interior" of the protocol of the summit meeting, business partners in various countries agreed to start creating a Mirror for Humanity.

New political thinking, the initial attempts to carry out conversion of the defence-related industries, the development of Soviet-Japanese relations for citizens of small cities (with a population of less than 100,000) in Siberia and the Far East will soon acquire real forms in a network of ground satellite communication stations. The feeling of "distant proximity" experienced by inhabitants of a previously unknown town during their direct contact with people in other cities, countries and continents will oust the provincial inferiority complex and arouse curiosity, interest and the desire to learn more by the next communication session.

This may give rise to the appearance of a Soviet-Japanese archipelago of technopolices (already shaping in the Land of the Rising Sun) in which people will possibly become a little happier. Incidentally, this technotronic archipelago could also include the Kuril islands. It is a micro-wild idea today. But what about tomorrow?

Ten years ago the American futurologist and designer Buckminster Fuller, who contributed to realization of the idea of a "global brain" by his cupola-shaped structures (the map drawn up by him, exceeding all previous ones in its precision, is reproduced on the cover of this issue), in his 20-page reply to my invitation to take part in the project Expedition to Human Hidden Reserves stated: "There is no technological know-how conceptioning in group consciousness." Unfortunately, he was not alive when space television bridges were organized.

Two global projects completed in the 20th century have produced Bomb and Ballistic Missile. This finally compelled man to come to new political thinking. One more global project is necessary. After weapons of mass annihilation it would become an instrument of mass revival. Such a project is Mirror for Humanity, the stage of a global theatre, as it were, an electronic version of the Tower of Babel by creating which humanity will develop, as behested, into a reasonable community.

Can the Tower of Babel be built by electronic means?

Drawing by Nikolai Koshkin

Comparing the shaping Mirror for Humanity with the Tower of Babel, which was not completed, I want to recall the fate of its builders: the Lord confounded their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth; and they left off to build the city.

The *Biblical Encyclopaedia* says that the slabs used for building the Tower of Babel were each 20 feet long, 15 feet wide and 7 feet thick. In the metrical system it is the size of a large standard video screen (6m x 4.5m x 2m) developed by electronic corporations of Japan and other countries.

The sunray accompanying the first visit of the Soviet President to the Land of the Rising Sun could unite those who, following naive sage men of ancient times, believe that the best way to check whether a dream is realistic is to realize it immediately.

Joseph Goldin,
the author and coordinator
of the project

A journey to the dark side of the moon

The future is bleak and elections cannot be called fair

Lord Nicholas Bethell

When I first visited Abania in 1988, it was a journey to another world, to the dark side of the moon. As Europe's least-known country, it bewildred outsiders with its Balkan mixture of nationalism and fervent commitment to a pure communism.

Who's opening up?

After Hoxha's death in 1985 a few windows began to open. Deputy Foreign Minister Mahomet Kaplani was displeased when I suggested to him that Albania was opening up to the rest of the world. The exact opposite was the case, he said. The world was opening up to Albania. "It is like when you see from your compartment what seems to be another train beginning to move. In reality, you are the people who are moving. We are standing still in the spot where we have always been. You are moving towards us and soon you in England will adopt the Albanian way"

Hoxha was dead, but it did not seem that way. He still towered over his people, shiny with gold-leaf, from the main square of almost every town and his massive writings are on sale, finely bound, in the tiniest street kiosk. Stalin too was still on his pedestal, both literally and figuratively. A large statue of him stood off Skanderbeg Square in the centre of Tirana.

Some of the Westerners with me in 1988 were impressed by the "nobly savage" lifestyle of "plucky little Albania," with its battered, picturesque farms.

The problem about this rural idyll was that it relied not only on poverty, but also on repression. It threw Amnesty International into despair. The violations of human rights were so widespread, said one of their reports, that information about its extent was impossible to obtain.

In Stalin's day, we were told, things were better. He helped Albania against Yugoslavia and Tito, who wanted to make them into a colony, and against the Western secret services.

The main impression we got was of a survival economy and an infrastructure geared more to military awareness than to any prospect of fulfilling the citizen's basic material needs. Buildings in the towns were shabby and chipped. Shops and restaurants had little to offer. A trip abroad, we were told, required two generations of loyal Party service.

Security is the reason for it all. The country was on constant alert, with little distinction made between espionage and harmless enquiry. Questions on the customs declaration were quite disarmingly direct: "Have you a radio receiver or a radio transmitter? Have you books, magazines or explosives?" They still saw the pen as being as mighty as the sword, the typewriter as more dangerous than the bomb.

The pure Marxist-Leninist economy had none of the flexibilities that could be found in the "revisionist" Soviet bloc.

Not one single dissident was able to raise a voice in public. The 1970 and 1974 elections showed a turn-out of 100 percent of the electorate, of whom 100 percent opted for the Communist group. On both polling days, apparently, not one adult was ill, abroad or otherwise unable or unwilling to vote with the majority.

...It seemed to me in 1988 that the Albanian Communists would continue to run their extraordinary country along the lines of the "Albanianist" religion that they invented to replace all others – a mixture of national pride, Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism in its most undiluted form and worship of the great Enver Hoxha who brought them to where they stand.

They had closed the churches and mosques, replacing them with beautiful museums, the country's one concession to luxury, with the new Enver Hoxha Museum in Tirana standing as the holiest of them all. Pride of place was given in the National Museum to Hoxha's statement: "The Albanian people has won its place in history with sword in hand." This seemed to me the key to Albania's future. The sword would remain. The Communist Party had no intention of beating it into a ploughshare, or of recycling it towards a tractor, or of trading in its guns in exchange for our Western butter.

Lenin remains

It was a very different story when I returned to Albania with a European Parliament delegation to take part in the March 31st elections. The statues of Stalin and Hoxha had been demolished – although Lenin remained, and of course Skanderbeg, the national hero. In all the main towns crowds greeted us with shouts of "Freedom and Democracy", making the "V for Victory" sign that was a feature of the Solidarity movement in Poland.

In Tirana, after the polling stations closed, I watched the count in President Ramiz Alia's constituency. It was clear that he was doing badly and it emerged that he had lost to an obscure Democratic Party academic. My old "friend" from 1988 Mahomet Kaplani, now promoted to Foreign Minister, was also doing badly and facing a run-off election.

But the game was being played on an uneven field. In the remote villages, many of them up mountain tracks, where 70 percent of the people live, there was no real election campaign and no foreign observers, only the Communist-controlled television and the Party machine.

These were the Communists' trump cards. As soon as the foreign dignitaries streamed into Tirana last week at the tail end of the campaign – visas were not made available for earlier visits – television news was given over

Tanks on Tirana streets: a prelude to the elections

to items showing them queueing up to be received at the court of Ramiz Alia and the other Communist leaders. Items about the opposition were about one tenth of the whole. Albanian villagers did not hear what the foreigners said. They merely saw them, night after night, pouring into the presidential palace to pay their respects.

"It is like starting a football match three goals down," said Eduard Selami, Secretary-General of the Democratic Party. He had just protested about television bias to Rexheb Maidani, chairman of the election control commission. "Mr Maidani has done nothing about our complaint. Of course not. He is not an impartial monitor. He is himself a candidate, supported by the Communists."

Dr Selami gave me a "shopping list" of electoral unfairnesses. Communist candidates toured their constituencies by car, whereas his people had to go by donkey or bicycle, or walk. The DP had only 19 cars at their disposal for the entire campaign.

It was the same story with communication. Almost all the technology that is the life-blood of any election, from photocopiers to paperclips, was in Communist hands. There were, it was claimed, more fax machines in the specially installed press centre in Tirana than in all the DP offices put together. The DP has only one newspaper, *National Rebirth*, its circulation is restricted to 50,000.

Dr. Selami said that DP telephones were often disconnected – deliberately, he suspected. Even when they worked, it was only on a local-call basis. In the DP headquarters in Elbassan on the eve of the election, I found party workers desperately trying to call Tirana, 35 miles away. Communist telephones were, of course, working much better.

In such circumstances, with such a wide gap in the resources and technology available to the two main contestants, the DP had no better chance of beating the Communists than the Iraqi army had of beating the Americans.

DP candidates also complained of police harassment. They were taken off buses by police and delayed while their documents were checked. Several said that they had been beaten up. In country areas rumours were put about that those who failed to vote communist would be identified later by their fingerprints on the ballot paper and dealt with accordingly.

Given their limited access to the mass media, the DP's best means of campaigning was through open-air rallies. These were impossible to arrange in the villages, but they worked well in the towns – until the government started restricting them.

Opposition leader Sali Berisha's final rally on March 29th should have been in Skanderbeg Square. The authorities moved it to a housing estate on the edge of town. A ring of tall buildings limited the number that could sensibly attend. There was no platform and the speakers could hardly be seen.

Even these rallies carried the shadow of heavy-handed police behaviour and exemplary prison sentences imposed on men who took part in previous meetings. In Elbassan, for instance, we were told about Mithat Havari, who was in the local police station after receiving a sentence of 17 years for "vandalism" during a demonstration on December 14th. DP leaders in the town said that he had done nothing but speak against the Communists and make the party's "V for Victory" sign.

The worst human rights violator

The next day Director of Prisons Edmond Caja took us to Bardhore labour camp, nine miles of potholed track from Kavaja – our truck took 75 minutes to cover the distance – where we met a man arrested during the same incident. All those taken that day had been beaten up and tortured, he said, and at one stage Havari had been close to death.

Carefully timed releases of political prisoners, 200 on the day before the election, were designed to impress visitors with the government's new tolerant attitude. It is true that there have been some steps forward since the dreadful days under Enver Hoxha when patrol boats would shoot people trying to swim to the Greek island of Corfu and when escapers caught on the Greek frontier would be dragged through the streets of their home villages behind tractors until they died.

Nevertheless, my visit to Bardhore showed me that there are still many men in Albanian prisons for non-violent acts of dissent, for crimes like "behaving in an undignified manner" or "insulting the memory of Enver Hoxha." Albania's traditional reputation as the worst human rights violator in Europe probably still holds good.

The Communists won, but how long the "reelected" government can last is doubtful. They say they want a mixed economy. But it is hard to see how this can happen under the aegis of the world's most dedicated Marxist-Leninist-Stalinists, in towns where an average wage is 600 leks a month, in villages where an average wage is 200 leks a month. ($1 is 10 leks at the official rate, 30 leks at the free rate.)

They say that they want to join the Helsinki process. But their human rights performance is not good enough. They say that they want closer links with the European Community – and of course development aid from it. Until recently, though, they were denouncing the European Community as an imperialist invention and quoting Lenin's verdict, expressed in 1915: "European unity is either impossible, or it is reactionary."

The future of Albania is therefore bleak and Sunday's elections cannot be called useful, let alone fair.

TIRANA–LONDON

IRAQ

Looking death in the eyes

Does the international community have the right to interfere in the internal affairs of a country if its rulers are perpetrating genocide against their own people?

It has been announced in Baghdad that the Kurdish uprising had been crushed. According to an official statement, "security, order and the rule of law have been restored; the military actions have been successfully completed." Iraq's leaders have called on the residents of the northern regions who had left their homes to come back saying they need not fear for their lives and property.

These words, most likely, are intended for the outside world.

According to some calculations, the number of Kurds living in their communities in the triangle between Turkey, Iraq and Iran reaches 25 million. Some 12-15 million Kurds live in Turkey (a quarter of the country's population), in Iraq – 4 million, in Iran – 6-8 million and in Syria – about one million. A Kurdish population, numbering 300,000 also lives in the USSR, and tens of thousands of Kurds either work or have refugee status abroad, in particular in Europe.

Kurds, who from time immemorial have been living in the mountainous regions rich in water and oil (in the north of Iraq) and who have no right to these main natural resources of the region, have not yet recovered from the consequences of Saddam Hussein's chemical bombings in 1988, especially those of the city of Halabja that have claimed the lives of almost 5,000 civilians. And today they are witnessing the frustration of their dream of liberating Iraqi Kurdistan from the oppression of Baghdad and of the collapse of the Hussein's regime. In a word, these proud people,descendants of the ancient Medians related to the Persians and the Afghans, have good reason to mistrust Hussein. They are not returning to their homes, but, trying to save themselves from genocide, are fleeing to mountainous regions in northern Iraq bordering on Iran and to the border with Turkey. There, taking shelter in snow-bound tents, they are awaiting international aid. Hunger, cold and disease have already taken the lives of some 1,500-plus refugees and about two dozen children die every day. It is expected that the total number of refugees will top the one million mark. At stake is the survival of the entire people.

Ever since the time of the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, after the First World War, millions of Kurds have dreamt of creating their own national state. Especially as under the treaty of Sévres of 1920 between sultanic Turkey and the allied powers they have the right to do so. Yet this treaty is mere paper. Later Great Britain turned over to Iraq the oil-rich region of Mosul where it had been planned to create a Kurdish state. This diplomatic move on the part of London has more than once provoked conflicts between Iraq and its neighbours which stimulated the Kurds to organize numerous, yet unsuccessful uprisings. It is not without reason that the Kurds call their fighters "peshmerga," that is, "people who look death in the eyes."

Like the uprising of the Iraqi Shiites in the south of the country, the present Kurdish liberation movement began immediately after the liberation of Kuwait. In fact, these actions have been engendered by calls by the American president to overthrow the regime of Saddam Hussein. Both Kurds and Shiites assumed that they would get more than just positive statements from across the ocean and that the insurgents would be given practical assistance. Especially as early this year President Bush signed a secret directive authorizing the CIA to give secret aid to the Iraqi forces opposing the Baghdad ruler.

In the beginning the insurgents did well. Taking advantage of Saddam Hussein's state of confusion following his defeat in Kuwait, the Kurds seized the largest cities in the north – Mosul and Kirkuk, and the Shiites established control over Najaf and Kerbela, the sacred places for that sect of Islam. At some point, 40 percent of Iraq's territory were in the hands of the insurgents.

Damnation to the Hussein regime

Photo from Newsweek

But the Iraqi prisoners of war that had been set free by the allies joined the ranks of Saddam Hussein's regular army. The war machine of the Baghdad dictator has been far from smashed completely. But his main support is the Republican Guard. Now the guardsmen are repaying the debt they owe to their master. Thanks to Saddam Hussein, in the occupied Kuwait they could have for themselves all the spoils of war they wanted, and even the crushing defeat by multinational forces has not affected their well-being. Even today officers continue to receive the salaries of ministers, and many guardsmen have been given houses and cars. Naturally, feeling such care for themselves on the part of Saddam Hussein, the Republican Guard is ready to defend the ruling regime no matter what the cost.

Like in Kuwait, in the struggle against the Kurdish insurgents the army of Saddam Hussein employed scorched earth tactics. In the civil war the army used Soviet-made Scud missiles, SU-22 bombers (although Americans forbade the Iraqi ruler the use of aviation against the insurgents, they actually often turned a blind eye to such violations), napalm and chemical weapons. Tanks, aviation and heavy artillery were used against virtually unarmed people. Iraqi troops have razed to the ground many Kurdish cities and villages, and the civilian population has been subjected to genocide. Saddam's soldiers burst into hospitals killing the wounded and the sick and staging public executions.

According to eyewitnesses, the atrocities committed by the Iraqi regular army have even put to shame the horrors of the gas attack against the Kurds from the city of Halabja.

Short of the help of the great powers and facing the apathy of the international community, the uprisings of the Kurds in the north and of the Shiites in the south of Iraq have been brutally crushed, although Kurds in the mountains, like Shiites in the area of Basra will, probably, continue their partisan warfare.

One more Kurdish tragedy wouldn't have happened, had the war machine of the allies not come to a standstill two hundred kilometres from Baghdad. They say that at that time President Bush and the commander-in-chief of the allied forces Schwarzkopf have fallen out with each other. Not wishing to irritate Moscow, Beijing and his Arab allies, the head of the White House adopted the tactic of "non-interference in Iraq's internal affairs." There is no doubt that pragmatic Bush feared that the United States could be drawn into an endless religious and ethnic conflict that could not bring any dividends. Not only the United States, but also its allies call such an approach an example of "realistic politics." The general, for his part, was of the opinion that without a total defeat of Saddam Hussein it was impossible to ensure peace and security in that region. The President's point of view prevailed, and Schwarzkopf was made to apologize.

The ensuing developments in the north and in the south of Iraq have shown that the "non-interference" of the allies gave Saddam Hussein a chance to feel his oats again. And although according to the American ambassador, the UN Security Council has adopted two "very tough but fair" resolutions 687 and 688, their effectiveness has turned out to be substantially weakened. Time has been playing into Saddam Hussein's hands. Having crushed the uprising of Kurds and Shiites, he has readily accepted resolution No.687 which provides for ceasing hostilities in the Gulf area.

The condolences of the world community and humanitarian assistance of the great powers (the United States was the first to provide such aid using military transport planes) is the maximum the Kurdish refugees and the Shiites can count on. Moscow and Beijing, preoccupied with their own problems, were not interested in the adoption of a resolution designed to condemn Iraqi repressions of the Kurds because they did not want to create a precedent that could work against them in the future. In their turn, Great Britain and the United States, who have not decided yet on whom they should count in post-Saddam Iraq, are trying to avoid being drawn into the internal strife of that country. In addition, other members of the Security Council, mostly countries of the Third World, are also facing at home problems similar to that of Kurds, hence they were extremely cautious about the UN resolution condemning Saddam Hussein for the crimes against his own people.

Does the international community that has prompted Kurds and Shiites to rise against the dictator have a right to interfere in the internal affairs of the "Saddam Empire?" The director of the Kurdish Institute in Paris Kendal Nezan thinks that it does. "From August 2, 1990, we have been constantly told about the new Hitler and the military crimes perpetrated by the Hussein dictatorship against his neighbours," stresses Nezan. "In Kuwait, Saddam committed acts of terror, pursued a policy of scorched earth and the seizure of thousands of civilians. The small state has been liberated. But when Saddam – that monster in the creation of which everyone has had a hand – commits the same crimes against his own people, they say that this is Iraq's internal affair." And indeed, can one really talk about the victory of the new world order when the people that have already for a long time been paying for the dictatorship have been abandoned to be torn to pieces?

It seems that the great powers prefer "stability" in Iraq to the chaos of an unpredictable civil war. Even if this "stability" means that the Iraqi people have to live for many years to come in the conditions of a dictatorship.

Yakov Borovoi and Alexander Chudodeyev

Towards the parity of common sense

After the Gulf war. Reflections on foreign policy priorities and a new world order

Andrei Kozyrev,
Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation

The aggression one Arab country committed against another Arab country, and not the two Arab countries' joint action against "imperialism," has questioned the validity of the confrontation scheme "the USSR and the Third World together against the West" and the utopian view that a non-nuclear, non-violent and demilitarized world was just around the corner.

The war is over, the struggle continues

Both types of thinking are a form of parasitism cultivated by the totalitarian system. One type of thinking has helped the system to justify its strengthening at home and expansionism abroad. The other has helped to liberate the economy from the excessive burden without actually affecting the positions of the most conservative segments of society.

Lengthy speculations about the priority of shared human values are too abstract (there has been no explanation of what these shared values really are, the only thing we heard were very general notions of global survival) and they cannot be the point of departure for a really radical revision of policy. The very concept of priority makes it possible to profess a quite different (or old) faith in the concrete circumstances. This is an explanation of why the revolutions in Eastern Europe, which had initially been accompanied with a chorus of assurances that their only objective was to strengthen the socialist community, are often percepted today as a grave loss, or a gross miscalculation. The defeat of the Iraqi regime is now largely regarded in a similar light.

This means that we must return to a common sense which will allow us to see ourselves and the world around us as realistically as possible, to give priority to the interests of the survival of the peoples of Rusia and the Soviet Union as a whole. In this context, the Persian Gulf crisis gives us much food for thought.

First, the world community consists of nation states which pursue their own, often conflicting, interests. Growing interdependence does not eliminate the necessity to uphold these interests, but commands that they be analyzed with an account taken of the changing international climate. Second, even the most sincere declarations about the necessity of a better world cannot be a substitute for international law. To promote international law, it is necessary that this country take concrete steps to associate its interests with the rule of law as it calls on other countries to do. Third, it has been confirmed that developed countries of pluralistic democracy and free-market economy are more inclined to safeguard international law than authoritarian dictatorships. Pluralistic free-market democracies are based on a set of rules providing for freedom of enterprise and trade, while authoritarian dictatorships are based on total and unlimited power.

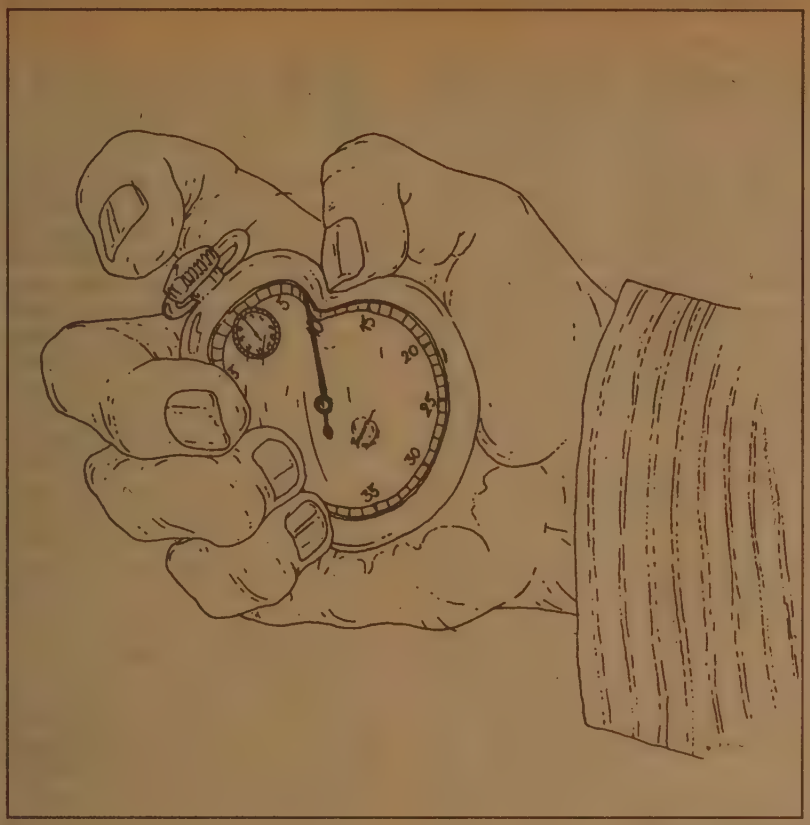
It has become clear that, although the cold war is over, the global fight for democracy, human rights and non-violence – real shared human values – continues. The success of this fight will continue to be made up of small local victories won in individual regions and countries. And of utmost importance for the world's future are processes that will develop in the world's vastest nation, the Soviet Union.

The US threat again?

It seems that Soviet custodians of the old system want to make this country's new relations with the United States and the West one of the victims of the desert war. They correctly believe that tolerance of freedom of choice abroad means a mortal risk inside the country. They have understood that betraying one's ideological partners and friends abroad, one eventually betrays oneself. That is why those custodians' main concern now is to preserve this "trench mentality."

The defeat of the Iraqi army and, which is more important, the hard blow on the position of Iraq's bellicose leaders is a serious trouble for those whose dogmatic approaches have brought the immensely rich Eurasian nation down to the level of underdeveloped Asian and African countries as far as the standards of living and ecology are concerned, and who are still possessed by the idea of strategic parity and equal spheres of interests in various regions of the world, the Middle East included. Paradoxically, though, Saddam Hussein's defeat has also encouraged the hard-liners. They interpret the very fact of Iraq's defeat as the confirmation of their thesis that aggressive forces have never stopped being active in the world. At the same time, they are trying hard to disguise the source of that threat, placing the traditional enemy, the USA, in the stead of aggressive authoritarian Third World regimes. This is basically a manifestation of an original neo-confrontation ideology which is designed to provide new arguments for the preservation of obsolete approaches in domestic and foreign policy.

The main argument of the proponents of neo-confrontation doctrine is that the defeat of Iraq leads to a dangerous increase in the United States' international power and influence. The fact that the



Drawing by Priit Pärn

role of the United States has grown is obvious. But does this mean that the threat to peace has similarly grown? Not necessarily.

First, even before the fear of American dominance in the world used to be largely the product of our imagination. Let us look back, not at the ideologically distorted version of history presented in CPSU textbooks, but at the real results of post-war international development. The American involvement and even military presence in Europe has not always been undesirable for the Soviet Union and other nations. Unlike our former allies in Eastern Europe, the United States' Western friends are in no hurry to break off traditional ties. Western European countries have high living standards and a high level of competiveness which gives us no grounds to call Western European countries deprived in any way. Today, we want Western European countries to help us with their experience, credits and advanced technologies.

Second, there is no question of any Pax Americana in the multipolar system of today's world. The aggression in the Persian Gulf was not launched from US military bases. On the contrary, without the US military presence, this act of international brigandage might never have been rebuffed. Unfortunately, most Soviet politicians have not found a kind word for Americans and other coalition soldiers who sacrificed their lives for the sake of peace. If we are really interested not in the aggravation of passions, and new adventures abroad – the attitude to Saddam Hussein suggests that international adventurers are still influential in this country – we should develop a more balanced approach to the time limits and scale of the US and coalition forces', especially naval forces', presence in the post-conflict zone.

With minimal losses

The crisis in the Persian Gulf is very instructive from the military-technological viewpoint. It is commendable that this time Soviet generals do not pretend to be unperturbed and openly speak about the advantages of US weapon technologies. It would be good if we could also modernize our arsenals. However, the conclusion that a further unbridled quantitative and qualitative arms race is necessary would be an error in strategy. Today to succumb to the paranoid temptation to maintain a parity with the US in all regions of the world and in all weapon systems means to bring the national economy to the brink of final catastrophe. In addition, this conclusion would be completely unjustified because US weapons as such constitute no threat to the Soviet Union. This must be made clear.

The United States crushed the Iraqi military machine with civilian losses which were minimal for an armed conflict of that magnitude. The Americans also used their technological preponderance to minimize their own losses. However, unlike Baghdad, Washington never threatened to use weapons of mass destruction. On the contrary, during the very first days of the war the United States officially declared there was no question of using such weapons in the Gulf war. Unlike the aggressor, the United States did not violate any international legal norms, including those concerning taking hostages from among foreign nationals or diplomatic personnel. If Saddam Hussein had miscalculated the might of those who would oppose him, this fact can be upsetting only for his patrons or supporters.

It is practically impossible to imagine the Americans attacking the Soviet Union today. Very simply, the United States has no reason to attack us. We are guaranteed against any attack by our enormous nuclear potential. However, fewer nuclear warheads would also provide an absolute guarantee against any attack on Soviet borders. However, we must learn serious lessons from the Persian Gulf crisis as far as the national security and prospects of this country are concerned. Our technological backwardness which was visible even before is acquiring a strategic character. However hard we might try to make this country's military-industrial complex into a separate state within a state, the Soviet Union's aggravating general economic lag behind the United States cannot but affect the sphere of defence production either.

Let us be frank: this gap has formed not in the past two years when democratic forces assumed nominal power in individual cities and whole republics, and not in the short era of glasnost and democratization. Let us not fool ourselves with the delusion that the returtn to the "law and order" of Stalin/Brezhnev will solve this problem. While the industrialization of this country became possible through hyperconcentration of resources amassed in one place and by a single will, a computerization of a nation can be achieved only by an economic system based on free enterprise, creativity, and a high level of consumption and services. Even half-naked GULAG prisoners are able to push wheelbarrows, but only an emancipated and comfortably well off person can solve problems of scientific and technological progress with the help of a computer.

The ideological and party past of the military-industrial elite of this country leaves that elite no chance to produce at least a reformer of the Pinochet style. On the other hand, the country needs strong power to carry out radical reforms. Such strong power could be generated from an alliance between a popularly elected president of Russia and the president of the USSR backed with the reformable segment of the state bureaucracy, military and civilian professionals.

To be patriotic in this country today does not mean to advocate modernization of armaments and preservation of hypercentralized power, but to be bold enough to undertake gradual, radical military reform that could strengthen the army and protect it from ideological indoctrination and performing police functions alien to the army. To be patriotic now means to channel more funds into the civilian sector, to defend the budding democracy and to start integrating the Soviet Union into the world economic system based on the free-market principles. We will be able to hope for greater security and the great-power role in the world, only if we shift the emphasis of our efforts to the establishment of a parity with the developed nations, the parity of quality of life and quality of economy.

New challenges

It is necessary to reflect on what the world will be like after Desert Storm without the already familiar euphoria about the new era in the international relations and without the old fear of the American dominance. The Third World, the primary source of instability, religious and other kinds of fanaticism, contempt for democracy and other shared human values, will require much attention. We have yet to learn to develop relations with the Third World on the basis of mutual economic benefit and without massive arms supplies.

The concern for security requires that we switch our attention to the areas of instability stretching along the Soviet Union's southern borders in Central and Western Asia. The problem with those areas cannot be reduced to the presence of US military bases there, more of a problem is the fact that countries claiming regional hegemony are engaged in an intensive arms race.

Even more dangerous is our own division of those countries into pro-Western and progressive ones. The criterion for division must be the degree of those countries' desire to acquire weapons of mass destruction and delivery vehicles. The reflex of strengthening inter-state relations with the help of massive arms supplies, including the supplies of state-of-the-art aircraft and missiles in order not to let the friendly regimes switch sides, is still at work. Will we learn anything from the Iraqi lesson? After all, the Iraqi missiles might as well have carried chemical warheads, thus lowering the threshold beyond which the regional war could develop into a large-scale conflict – with the use of the entire potential for mass destruction.

This makes one think that what we really need is not confrontation with the West, or regional rivalry, but close business-like cooperation with the West for the sake of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, military missiles and missile technologies, and banning chemical arms. We must begin with a critical reassessment of our own practice. In the final analysis, the Soviet Union may easily be the most interested country, because in case regional conflicts in the Third World grow tragic, the Soviet Union will be one of the first countries to be exposed to radioactive fallout.

By the way, the quality and quantity of information about the exports of Soviet-made tanks, aircraft and even missiles, available to our MPs and the general public remains incomparable to what American legislators and public know about the state of their armaments. It would be good if the bloody lesson of the Gulf war sobered us up. Can morals and morality be reconciled with our top brass' stubborn desire to lecture the United States and the West for "excessive use of force against the aggressor," with the top brass' silence about the Soviet Union's role in arming aggressive regimes. What about the victims of the use of Soviet-made missiles and other advanced weapons in Afghanistan? Where else are authoritarian regimes busy getting Soviet-made combat vehicles ready for battles against their own peoples or neighbouring nations? I do not mean that we must leave international arms markets. I only want to say that military exports require clear-cut legislation, glasnost and economic expediency.

(To be concluded)

Petre Roman, head of the Romanian government, once said: "I had almost no easy moments in my post as Premier. There were pleasant moments, but none were easy..." I recalled these frankly spoken words on the day when Romania's Prime Minister was presented with a commemoration medal of the Council of Europe in recognition of his contribution to the consolidation of democracy in Romania. It was presented by Mr Anders Björk, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council. He emphasized in particular: "The Council of Europe will not interfere in the internal affairs of the Romanian people. But there is an exception – the question on human rights, which will never be regarded by Europe as the internal affair of your country."

I don't know what Petre Roman was thinking about in those solemn moments. Maybe he thought that his efforts to somehow stabilize the internal situation, to explain to the world community what was happening in the country's political life and convince his wealthy European partners to open up for Romania the door to Europe have started, at long last, to bear fruit.

Looking back, one can say that in the eyes of near and distant neighbours until recently Romania looked like an island with remnants of totalitarianism. As presented by political opponents, from the first weeks of its existence the National Salvation Front (NSF) was called "a cover for neocommunism," "a usurper of power," "a screen behind which the second echelon of party nomenklatura and Securitate operates." Internal difficulties have thoroughly undermined the population's trust in the NSF. Opinion polls showed that only 13 percent of Romanians were satisfied with the government of Petre Roman. The national economy turned from bad to worse and shortages increased. There exists indecision and even opposition to economic reform and transition to a market economy. The old has not yet gone, the new is born in great torments and, quite often, in a distorted form. Privatization of trade has been received with oversensitivity by Romanians. In detriment to the majority, it has made richer the minority, which even under dictatorship lived comfortably. Former party functionaries, staff members of Securitate and black market dealers became private traders. Corruption, typical of previous structures, has affected the new ones.

From the Front to a party

A conference of the NSF was held recently against this unfavourable

Difficult parting with dictatorship

To build a new society is much more difficult than overthrowing a dictatorship...

background. What did it discuss? During 15 months of its existence, the NSF has not yet created its own structures. The population has only a vague idea about its activity. The Front's local organizations are inactive outside the capital and some industrial centres. They have yielded positions to political opponents. Therefore, the main points on the agenda were the new programme and Rules of the NSF and the conversion of the Front into a European-type Social Democratic Party.

The response of friends as well as political opponents to the conference was practically the same: the Front and its leaders had become considerably stronger after the conference. Local and foreign observers believed it was of no substantial importance that 58 MPs who did not agree with the adopted programme declared secession from the party. It is quite likely that these dissidents may think better of it and change their categorical decision – the result of ordinary emotions.

It is obvious, however, that the opposition of those who come out against the current pace of the country's transition to a market economy and its entry into European structures may play a certain role. This transition is gaining momentum with each passing day.

Against the blockade

As is generally known, after the clashes between the opposition and miners on June 13-15, 1990, all European capitals resolutely condemned the actions of the Romanian authorities and suspended economic and humanitarian aid "until the restoration of democracy in Romania." The EEC refused to ratify the agreement on economic cooperation. The painstaking work of Romanian and European experts on a programme of cooperation with the EEC and financial organizations of Europe was stopped. Economic blockade had its effective results. Crossing the country in August 1990 from the west to the east and from the south to the north I did not see a single truck with a trailer loaded with imported goods. In former days all the roads were packed with them. Romania was in isolation. Special envoys sent out to different countries of the world returned empty-handed. One of them said at the Bucharest airport: "We have no one to rely on. Romania must get out of its crisis alone."

Difficult days set in for the government. The political opposition rejoiced. But the government went on looking for a way out of isolation. Salvation came from an unexpected source. It was the crisis in the Persian Gulf that helped Romania. Being a traditional partner of Iraq, Romania, nevertheless, backed the Security Council resolution taking the side of the anti-Iraqi coalition. This was noticed and appreciated in political cricles in the West.

Things began to improve. The process of the restoration of Romania's prestige started, albeit gradually. Here mention should be made of the special role played by Prime Minister Petre Roman. He paid visits to Luxemburg, Paris, Geneva, Brussels, Strasbourg and Ankara. According to foreign political observers, Romanian diplomacy abroad operated quite efficiently, displaying flexibility and a timely response to events.

– What are you doing here?
– I wanna hook a foreign capital
Drawing from the Romanian Life magazine

Although this foreign policy activity was accompanied by a sharp deterioration of the situation at home and the destructive policy of the leading opposition parties, the government continued its policy of helping Romania out of its isolation. Now these efforts seem to have produced results. In March, President Ion Iliescu approved the law ratifying the agreement between Romania and the EEC and the European Atomic Energy Community. The signing of agreements was preceded by granting Romania the status of a specially invited member by the Council of Europe. The U.S. Administration backed Romania's request for a loan in the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and, on its part, allocated for this purpose 40 million dollars. The Romanian National Bank received credit on the order of 300 million dollars from the IBRD and from 12 private banks of developed countries. On the one hand, this will help Romania pay for the above-quota imports of goods and, on the other, it is a sign that the country is returning to Europe, although with certain difficulties.

A moment of truth

Will the population back this policy? The moment of truth came, as expected, on April I when in accordance with the recommendations of the International Monetary Fund a second rise in prices was put into effect. The government came under pressure from two sides. The fulfilment of recommendations was connected with obtaining a billion-dollar loan and... with the new aggravation of social tension inside the country. Trade union leaders declared that the rise in prices led to the impoverishment of workers and pensioners and that they were ready to bring into the streets demonstrations of protest. The government confirms its intention of carrying through its economic reform.

The expected confrontation may have serious consequences for the economy and the political situation in the country. The resignation of the Petre Roman government mustn't be ruled out either. In that case the Social Democratic Party – National Salvation Front will find itself in opposition and a coalition government formed by the representatives of the parliamentary opposition may become the most likely successor to the present government.

Sergei Svirin,
our own correspondent
BUCHAREST

The Khmer Rouge are confident that they will return to Pnom Penh

Blood is shed in the dry season too

The opposition is confident of its future victory. The government has no intention of sharing its power with others. Hopes for peace are very illusory

The situation in Cambodia is often compared to that in Afghanistan. During the last 12 years the regime, assisted by Vietnamese troops, proved unable to establish full control over the country and crush the opposition.

The Khmer Rouge

The backbone of the opposition is formed by the Khmer Rouge – roughly 50,000 soldiers who are equipped with Chinese arms and have acquired considerable fighting experience. A year after their smashing defeat they began to make raids on Vietnamese army posts, blow up bridges and lay mines on roads. The same tactics were used by the Vietnamese themselves against the Americans. In Cambodia they understood how difficult it is for a regular army to fight against guerrillas.

Son Sen, defence minister in the government of Democratic Kampuchea, replaced Pol Pot as commander of the Khmer Rouge forces. He changed tactics. The Khmer Rouge began to penetrate into villages, kill activists of the ruling People's Revolutionary Party, and recruit people into their army.

After the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops the Khmer Rouge operate ever more successfully. Judging by observations by foreign specialists, in a difficult situation regular government troops quickly stop resistance while home guardsmen run away or desert.

The Khmers find it difficult to forget that at the very least one out of six citizens of Cambodia was killed during three and a half years of Pol Pot's rule. However, the attitude to the Khmer Rouge changed somewhat after Vietnamese troops invaded Cambodia in 1978. Pol Pot said in one of his interviews given in April 1982: "People must believe us. We are sincere. We have done away with the communist system. The party has been dissolved. We are re-establishing religion, private property and civil freedoms."

The journalists who visited the areas controlled by Pol Pot forces reported that the Khmer Rouge distributed salt, drugs and clothes in villages. They no longer mobilize peasants by force and buy rice from them at reasonable prices. Pol Pot, who once abolished money in the country, encourages small business and trade. He even allows the sale of tape recorders and cassettes with recordings of modern music smuggled in from Thailand.

In the past the Khmer Rouge fully depended on supplies of arms and munitions from China and some member countries of the ASEAN. In the opinion of military experts, they have accumulated huge stocks of armaments and are prepared to

For the first instalment see No. 14, 1991

fight for a considerable time. Rich deposits of rubies are being mined near the border with Thailand under Khmer Rouge control, thus making them more independent financially. Well armed and united, the Khmer rouge have also grown rich. In this tired country, where the people long for peace, they find considerably more supporters today than before.

Pol Pot is supported by those who believe that the present government in Pnom Penh is compromised by its cooperation with Vietnam and by those who understand that of all opposition forces, only the Khmer Rough have enough strength to take the country under their control. The weaker are prepared to side with the stronger.

In the struggle against Pnom Penh and the Vietnamese, the opposition forms a united front, but it is an unnatural alliance. The Khmer Rouge need Prince Norodom Sihanouk for prestige, because for many people he remains the only candidate for the role of national leader, while Sihanouk needs the Khmer Rouge as a force which can help him to regain power.

The "unsinkable" Sihanouk

Sihanouk has never cherished illusions about his allies. "The Khmer Rouge do not love me at all. I know that. I am simply useful to them. I understand very well that as soon as I cease to be useful to them they will spit me out like a fruit stone." Sihanouk said this back in 1973 while living comfortably in emigration in Beijing. After the victory of the Khmer Rouge he returned home, where he was put under house arrest. The Khmer Rouge dispatched a considerable part of the royal family. Sihanouk remained alive only because Mao Zedong and Kim Il Sung called him their personal friend.

After Vietnamese troops had driven the Khmer Rouge out of Pnom Penh, Sihanouk found himself in emigration again. He settled in Pyongyang, where Kim Il Sung built a villa for him and paid all his expenses. But in 1981 he decided to end his voluntary exile. It may be that he was unable to overcome his own political ambitions. But it is possible that he was insistently asked to join the struggle.

"I can lo longer live in peace and quiet here, in Pyongyang," Sihanouk said, "because people call me a pro-Vietnamese traitor and a selfish idler. Well, I am joining the struggle, though people do not understand that the Khmers live better now than under the Khmer Rouge and do not want a return of the latter. The resistance policy is absolutely unrealistic. It is a folly to fight in Cambodia. But I am compelled to take part in this folly; otherwise I shall be called a traitor."

Norodom Sihanouk asked China's foreign minister Huang Hua to provide arms for his forces. Huang Hua said that arms would be suppled but only if Sihanouk united with the Khmer Rouge. "I don't understand why some people want to remove Pol Pot," Deng Xiaoping said in 1984. "It is true that he made some mistakes in the past, but now he is leading the fight against the Vietnamese aggressors."

Thanks to Chinese efforts all opposition forces formed a united coalition. On June 22, 1982, in the capital of Malaysia, Khieu Samphan, Sihanouk and Son Sann, leader of the Free Khmers, signed an agreement on a coalition government and embraced each other. It was an alliance of ultraleftists, monarchists and republicans. There was no such a coalition before. Sihanouk explained his motives simply: "We had to choose between the prospects of being devoured either by the Khmers or by the Vietnamese, and we chose the first, because we are nationalists."

The Sihanouk forces number close to 15,000. Son Sann gradually raised his army to 12,000. It consists of people who fled from Cambodia long ago.

Son Sann and Free Khmers

The first refugees fled to Thailand right after the Khmer Rouge came to power. Roughly 34,000 had fled before 1979, and after the invasion of Vietnamese troops the flow of refugees increased tremendously. About half a million people fled to Thailand. Just as Zia ul-Haq, then president of Pakistan, promised aid to all Afghans who fled from the Marxist regime, so Thai premier Kriangsak Chamanan said that his country would accept all refugees from Indochina. Bangkok's decision was prompted by its desire to counter Vietnam. But there was an economic motive as well. All bodies concerned, from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to international Catholic organizations, gave aid to the refugees and, in particular, compensated for Thailand's expenditure on this.

Half a million people "stuck" in the military zone for more than ten years. They are not accepted by other countries and are afraid to return home. Growing up, young people replenish the opposition forces.

As distinct from China, Southeast Asian countries, which take a strong anti-Vietnamese stand, have always felt uncomfortable about an alliance with Pol Pot and have tried at least formally to deal not with the Khmer Rouge, but with non-communist resistance groups which have operated for many years in the area of the Cambodian-Thai border which is ideally suited for guerrilla warfare.

The group led by Son Sann has turned out to be the most serious force. An elderly man of Khmer-Vietnamese origin, he studied in Paris in the 1930s and worked in the French colonial administration. Under Sihanouk, he founded a national bank in 1955 and was premier in 1967 and 1968.

This is how Vietnamese troops entered Cambodia in 1978

This is how they left the country

Son Sann, head of the Free Khmers

Son Sen has replaced Pol Pot as commander of the Khmer Rouge forces

After General Lon Nol overthrew Sihanouk, Son Sann went to Paris, where he founded the National Front for the Liberation of the Khmer People. His was supported by a small section of the middle class and the Khmer diaspora who refused to deal with the Khmer Rouge. The opposition could not clearly become and did not become a single whole. It has constantly been torn by internal conflict.

Have Vietnamese troops left Cambodia?

There is practically no trustworthy information about Cambodia. It can only be supposed that the birth-rate has risen and the population has exceeded eight million. Agriculture is still unable to reach the prewar level, and there is shortage of rice in some provinces. There can be no talk of normal life in the areas of fighting. The People's Revolutionary Party remains small. The government army has roughly 60,000 men and officers. The Vietnamese regard it as a serious combat force. Western military experts are doubtful about its fighting capacity. An estimated 100,000 have been recruited into the home guard.

The Vietnamese understood from the very outset that they would not be able to stay in Cambodia permanently. That is why they tried to finish off the Khmer Rouge and strengthen their ally in Pnom Penh. They failed to fulfil the first task. And what about the second purpose?

At the end of 1989 Hanoi announced that the last Vietnamese soldier had returned home. However, not only Sihanouk but also observers from ASEAN countries assert that no fewer than 10,000 Vietnamese troops still remain in Cambodia. Today they wear uniforms of the Cambodian government army. The Vietnamese control strategic areas and communications and defend the avenues of approach to the capital.

Negotiations

Why did Vietnam begin to pull out its troops and urge Pnom Penh to negotiate with the opposition? It will be recalled that they started in December 1987 when Sihanouk and Cambodian premier Hun Sen met in France.

First, during all the years after its invasion Vietnam has been in a state of political and economic blockade. It can hope to get the blockade lifted and to receive aid only after a settlement in Cambodia. Furthermore, between 1977 and 1988 Hanoi lost 55,000 men. Second, a political, not military, settlement is now demanded by both China and the Soviet Union on which Vietnam has always depended. Pnom Penh's negotiations with the opposition are being conducted under the auspices of Security Council permanent members and ASEAN states.

The antagonistic parties have been offered a formula which envisages a ceasefire, the disbanding of all armed units and the present government bodies, the setting up of a supreme national council to be headed by Sihanouk and composed of representatives of all parties, the entry of UN troops in Cambodia, and general elections under international supervision.

This plan suits Sihanouk, who is confident of the magic power of his name. The Khmer Rouge believe that sooner or later they will regain power without elections. However, they feel pressure from China. The point is that the need to back the Khmer Rouge and supply them with essentials becomes more than onerous for Beijing. Zhao Ziyang, said three years ago: "The Khmer Rouge must not gain absolute power and the Heng Samrin regime, installed in office by Vietnam, must not continue to govern the country. I think that both dangers must be removed." Moscow and Beijing seem to have agreed in principle on ending arms supplies to the feuding parties.

Pnom Penh has started negotiations with Sihanouk under compulsion, following the decision of Vietnam, which does not want to fight in Cambodia any longer. In the opinion of Western analysts, the party leadership in Pnom Penh has no intention of sharing its power with others. That is why it objects to United Nations' active role and continues hostilities. At its recent plenum, the People'a Revolutionary Party again declared "the creative application of Marxism-Leninism in conditions of development of the Cambodian revolution" and called for "achieving a full and complete victory over the enemy."

The areas of concentration of opposition troops are pounded by the Grad rocket volley systems of fire. Whole villages are destroyed by such fire, and peasants have to leave their homes. According to the International Red Cross, 150,000 people have lost their homes as a result of such warfare. The number of homeless peasants is rising because, as observers report, the government is evicting people from villages which might be captured by the Khmer Rouge.

The most unpleasant discovery for those who do not follow the situation in Cambodia closely would be the Amnesty International material showing that, though

mass repressions stopped after Pol Pot had been driven out of the country, violations of human rights continue. After the Vietnamese pattern Pnom Penh has set up camps to "re-educate" those who have been "deceived" or, more exactly, for dissidents, though it seems that no people willing to risk their lives because of ideas have remained in Cambodia. The inmates of such camps are taught to "hate the enemies of the state and love the government." In this way dissidents are turned into "citizens useful to society."

According to Amnesty International, Cambodia has about 200 prisons. Tens of thousands of people served various terms in them on political charges. There is no light in cells. Many of them are underground and do not have enough fresh air. There is little water, and sometimes prisoners are not given it deliberately.

The laws adopted in 1980 enable the authorities to punish "traitors of the revolution" severely. Everyone who criticizes the government or the Vietnamese or talks on "illicit" subjects can be labelled as a "traitor." According to Amnesty International, torture is used on a wide scale. Those arrested are beaten by sticks or suffocated with plastic bags.

Pol Pot's punitive services were taught by "experts" from North Korea. Under Heng Samrin instructors arrived from Hanoi. This was revealed by one of Hun Sen's aides who fled to the West. A special study made by Amnesty International and entitled "Kampuchea: Political Imprisonment and Torture" says that two punitive departments of the Vietnamese special services, "B-68" and "A-50", have been set up to keep watch on Pnom Pen high-ranking officials. In other words, Hanoi instructors tried to govern Cambodia just as Moscow advisers lorded it over in Afghanistan.

Personnel changes

Negotiations with the opposition were entrusted to 39-year-old Hun Sen, who accepted the UN plan on the whole in Jakarta last September. He also agreed to become a deputy to Sihanouk in a supreme national council which is to govern the country during the transition period and to hold free elections. Experts believe that Hun Sen advocates economic reforms, a market economy and a departure from the one-party system. He favours improved relations with China. About 600,000 Chinese live in Cambodia. They were subjected to discrimination in the past. Hun Sen is believed to have given them the possibility to join the party and receive higher education.

However, many Pnom Penh leaders consider the opposition not a partner but an enemy with whom they should use only the language of strength. They have no desire to share power with anyone.

Three years ago Moscow's stand proved decisive in making Hanoi and Pnom Penh agree to negotiations. However, current developments in the Soviet Union diminish the extent of Moscow's influence on Vietnam. Without an impulse from outside Pnom Penh's readiness to reach an agreement may come to naught. A series of personnel changes has deprived Hun Sen of support from people who hold identical views. Many posts go to army officers who, like their Moscow colleagues, do not trust diplomats. The most influential man in Pnom Penh today is Chea Sim, a politburo member and chairman of the National Assembly, who was once a Buddhist monk, fought jointly with the Vietnamese against the French, and became secretary of a party committee under Pol Pot and home minister of the Heng Samrin government.

In general, all three "strong men" in Pnom Penh were once members of a provincial leadership under Khmer Rouge rule. Before May 1978, they worked in the eastern zone bordering on Vietnam. After the bloody purge organized by Pol Pot, Heng Samrin, the present general secretary of the People's Revolutionary Party, Chea Sim, chairman of the National Assembly, and premier Hun Sen took refuge in Vietnam and returned to Pnom Penh after their former comrades – the Khmer Rouge – had been driven out of the country.

Premier Hun Sen, who conducted negotiations with the opposition, seems to be losing his influence in Pnom Penh

Foreign journalists call National Assembly chairman Chea Sim head of the conservative wing

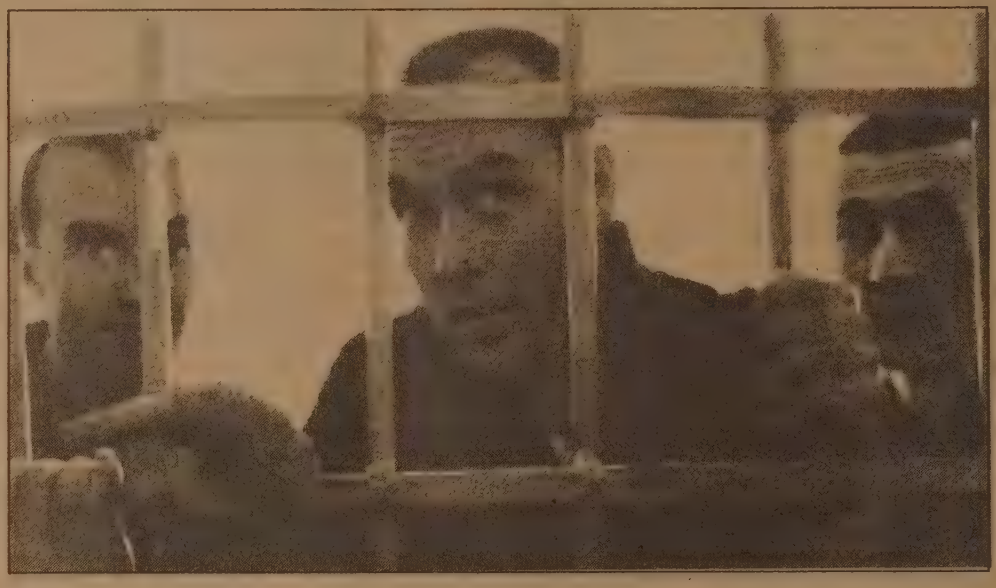
Heng Samrin is believed to be too pro-Vietnamese in his policy. Hun Sen's line is considered pro-Western. In the opinion of foreign correspondents, Chea Sim has a chance to become the next general secretary of the People's Revolutionary Party. Chea Sim appointed his relative to an important party post – head of the organizing department, chief of the central committee's managing office, and chairman of the commission for special communication. In his recent speeches Chea Sim, who now heads the central national council for call-up to military service, denied the possibility of accepting the key points of the UN plan for Cambodia with which Hun Sen had agreed in principle. This leaves little hope for an early end to the bloodshed in Cambodia, the restoration of peace in the country, and the return of hundreds of thousands of refugees home.

Leonid Mlechin

Photos from the magazines Der Spiegel (Germany) and Newsweek (USA) and by the Soviet news agency TASS

Prince Sihanouk, unlike his fellow countrymen, has somewhere to retreat to. This villa in Beijing was given to him by Mao Zedong

A woman soldier



The political prisoner of the 21st century

On February 18 – in the last Soviet camp for political prisoners (institution VS-389/35, Perm Region) – inmate Valery Yanin tried to commit suicide by opening his veins. He was saved

If no changes happen in his fate, Yanin is to serve his prison term until the year 2003. He will be set free after mankind is well into the 21st century.

Since 1977, the year of my own liberation, I have been keeping a lamentable record of political prisoners in our country. Starting with Tarusa, where I was under police surveillance, and then in Munich, in emigration, I have been publishing the book called *A List of Political Prisoners in the USSR*. Once it contained over 900 names (known only to me), now the figure has dropped to 100. Some were put behind bars, others got released or died, so the last list has nothing to do with the first one. However, the name of Valery Yanin was invariably present in each list.

Over these 14 years, thousands of fates have passed before my eyes, so I have a lot of comparisons to draw. I knew political prisoners who were locked up for dropping an incautious word, for diary entries, for an inscription in the Sportloto lottery... But over all this time I have not seen a case more absurd and incredible, and a verdict more ruthless, than the case of, and the verdict (or rather verdicts) on Valery Yanin.

I realize that the reader may not believe what I am going to relate. Therefore, I warn you that I shall proceed from the formal texts of the verdicts only. All the quotations are authentic. The story I am going to tell you now is most involved, and I should like you to follow all the evolutions of the plot most closely.

To Turkey, to Turkey, to Turkey...

In October, 1974, Valery Yanin, 27, of Kuibyshev (now again Samara), a graduate of Chernigov Higher Flying School, his wife Lyudmila and his nine-year-old son were detained in neutral waters as they tried to boat it to Turkey across the Black Sea. May I remind you that at that time one – and not anyone at that – could "leave" only if he had an Israeli connection. Valery had had no relatives in Israel, he, although a flier, had no intention of hijacking a plane, so he chose a method which could do harm to no one but the fugitives themselves.

That was perhaps why the Military Tribunal of the Moscow Military District pronounced Yanin

mentally ill and insane and "relieved him of criminal liability and sent him to a mental clinic" (to a mental prison, actually). He "took a course of treatment" there until 1978.

In the following year, Yanin was arrested again as he tried to boat it to Turkey across the Black Sea. That time, he was accompanied by A. Cherkasov, a friend of his, and N. Pyatayeva, a girl under age. It looked as if Yanin could not avoid a new spell in a mental clinic. The court decided, however, that Yanin was perfectly sane, but that his companion Cherkasov was very ill (do not look for any logic here, punitive psychiatry hasn't got any). Cherkasov was "prescribed a course of treatment," and Yanin was sentenced to five years in jail for "an illegal crossing of the border" and for "getting a girl under age involved into criminal activity." Since the "illegal crossing" is not regarded as a political crime, Yanin served his term in a common criminal camp in Kirghizia.

Investigation into the case revealed one almost curious circumstance. In this context the word "revealed" means what Yanin himself "talked." No other evidence was "dug out" by our glorious "agencies." This merits special attention because further on the "agencies" will have to deal a lot with Yanin's fascinating stories.

"Recruitment"

Well, Yanin told the investigators that before his flight to Turkey there had taken place another, let us say, "zero" flight. According to Yanin, he had fled – back in 1973, of course to Turkey, of course across the Black Sea and, of course, by boat. But, as distinct from the previous cases, he had fled fortunately. From Turkey, he had moved to the FRG, from the FRG to USA, making contacts with "secret services" on the way. Of the "secret services" Yanin named two – the NTS and the Tolstoy Foundation. The NTS needs no presentation now, it has opened its branches in many cities of the Soviet Union, from Leningrad to Magadan. As to the Tolstoy Foundation, let me explain to those who do not happen to know that it is a humanitarian organization which supports non-Jewish emigrants (the Jews are taken care of by HIAS) in the first hard months of emigration. In the years in question, the Tolstoy Foundation in Vienna issued 50 Schillings a day per emigrant – just enough for a MacDonald's lunch.

According to Yanin, the Tolstoy Foundation and the NTS behaved differently in his case. It had "recruited him" and smuggled him into the USSR "on a special mission." The "smuggling" took place in September, 1974, a year after the successful flight. The "secret services" delivered Yanin "by ship to Soviet territorial waters" after which he made it to shore on his own.

The character of the "special assignment" became known later, and we shall have a chance to dwell on it in more detail. In the meantime, let us note that the assignment was probably easy to fulfil because, as we know, just a month later, in October, 1974, Yanin made another flight which landed him in a lunatic asylum.

We must do justice to the Ukrainian "hush-hush" men – they did not believe in Yanin's stories about his secret trips to Turkey and the United States and did not put the charge of "high treason" on him. The sheets which those stories were recorded on added up to bulky volumes. In time, when new verdicts are pronounced on Yanin, those stories will live anew.

In the meantime, Yanin is serving his first term in the Kirghizian camp "for a violation of the border." He found out rather promptly that the camp administration took bribes. Now we know that bribe taking is common here, but it came as news to Yanin. And he "wrote complaints to central Party and government bodies about certain representatives of reformatory camp administration exacting bribes for a pre-term release." In confirmation of his statements, Yanin presented receipts which he and, on his recommendations, other prisoners took from other trusted prisoners."

The result was not difficult to predict. None of the "representatives of the administration" was put on trial, of course. Legal proceedings were instituted only against "a trusted convict" and Yanin himself. But since Yanin could not be tried for bribe giving ("the bribe-giving person is relieved of criminal liability if he, upon giving the bribe, admits to it of his own accord"), he was tried for "complicity in bribe giving" (?!) – he had encouraged other convicts, you see, to give bribes and to take receipts for them!

Yanin got a trifling term for his exposes (with his previous prison sentence taken into account): "eleven years, two months, 24 days, in hard labour camp."

All this is prehistory, however. And now there begins the history of Valery Yanin turning into an "official" political prisoner.

Agent Sasha from the town of Syzran

Shaken by the prospect of an eleven-year imprisonment, Yanin decided to make a getaway. Since that was impossible to do on his own, he talked a large group of other prisoners into joining him. He told them that he had influential acquaintances abroad, specifically in the Tolstoy Foundation, with whose help he would make a well-to-do life for the fugitives from the USSR. Yanin suggested that upon fleeing from the camp, they would proceed by way of Tashkent, Turkmenia to Iran and on to Turkey (Turkey, it seems, had a special appeal to Yanin).

On the night of June 19/20, 1983, Yanin and five other prisoners escaped from "Institution OP 36/19" through a 35-m long tunnel they had dug from the canteen. The fugitives then separated but did not stay at large for too long. Yanin was arrested in Tashkent as early as July 10.

At first, the new Yanin case did not seem to promise the investigators anything of special interest. "While admitting the fact of having escaped from prison, Yanin did not plead guilty on the grounds that he had been 'convicted illegally', as he put it." Before very long, however, things took an unexpected turn: Yanin began to give sensational evidence of his own free will.

This evidence boiled down to the following. "In 1979-1980 (when already in jail. – K.L.) he, Yanin, kept in touch with some representatives of anti-Soviet organizations and persons who maintained contacts with Western secret services.... While in reformatory camps in Kirghizian SSR in 1980-83, he gathered information on the situation in those camps and prisoners' complaints... Hadn't those been acted upon, he would have sent them abroad."

Who were the residents Yanin handed over his intelligence information to? According to the court's verdict, there were four of them: Yanin's wife, the well-known human rights activists Irina Grivnina and Marina Ryabova, and "Sasha from the town of Syzran, a foreign secret agent" (may I remind you that all the quotations from verdicts are authentic, you may take my word for it!). The residents were not taken into custody, however, and "Sasha from the town of Syzran" was never found.

Vyshinsky's times are past, and we no longer regard the defendant's confession as "the queen of proofs." Investigators found objective evidence, and here it is.

First of all, this is evidence given by the men whom Yanin had escaped from jail with and whom he had told about his foreign connections. For instance, "according to witness Malkov, Yanin had told him that while in the USA, Yanin had been recruited by the American intelligence service and given the assignment to gather negative information about Soviet corrective labour institutions and about the prisoners' position there." That confirmed Yanin's old story about his having been recruited by the Tolstoy Foundation.

Second, "on September 9, 1981, a letter which Yanin had asked a truck driver to deliver to the former's wife, Lyudmila, was intercepted at the camp gate. In that letter he instructed her to refrain, for the time being, from sending to the West the complaints and documents he had handed over to her but, in case of his death "to hand over everything you can."

Was that all? Yes, that was. What else would you like to know? Haven't you satisfied yourself that Yanin is an evil enemy in disguise?

Now you understand, I hope, what Yanin's assignment was and why the secret service called the Tolstoy Foundation sent Yanin by boat to the sea border of the USSR. Yanin had to find his way to a Soviet concentration camp with a view to gathering negative information, you see. Just try and understand foreign secret services' position: everyone knows what GULAG is all about, the accused dissidents send out torrents of information and hold press conferences, Academician Sakharov dwelt on the position of prisoners in his Nobel speech. The Chronicle of Current Events reports a lot of particulars. Amnesty International is sounding the alarm... Nevertheless, the uncertainty remains: what if all of them are telling lies? So let us plant our loyal agent, Yanin, in a concentration camp: he will come back and tell us exactly what is going on.

Do you see now why, within just a month of having been smuggled into the USSR across the sea border, Yanin crossed back to Turkey along the same route? That's right: in order to find his way into one of our dear concentration camps and to "take root" there.

Naive games with the devil

This wonderful version which our glorious KGB men took such delight in all but fell apart once. Some time after he had set everything forth so distinctly, Yanin suddenly proclaimed his evidence "a figment" and explained that he had given it in order "to attract the attention of the KGB which, seeing how capable Yanin was, could use him as a secret agent. Besides this, Yanin intended to confirm his accomplices in their assurance that he would not abandon them after the escape, to cover his tracks lest he should be looked for."

Poor Yanin – it was too late! Now he had to pay for his naive games with the devil. The glorious KGB was not going to miss this chance which was literally thrust on them. Having examined Case No. 1-32 on April 29, 1984, a session of the Supreme Court of the Kirghizian SSR chaired by A.M. Bobyrev and attended by prosecutor V.G.Kryachko brought in the following verdict:

"The court finds V.G.Yanin, a citizen of the USSR, guilty of making preparations, while serving time in corrective labour institutions of the Ministry of the Interior of the Kirghiz SSR in 1980-83, for fleeing from the country and cooperating with foreign states in conducting activity hostile towards the USSR, specifically in carrying out the anti-Soviet campaign 'On Human Rights Violations in the USSR' which does political damage to the Soviet state and impedes the implementation of Soviet peace initiatives in the international arena."

The court accused Yanin of "high treason." Under the pretence of objectivity, however, the court did not find Yanin guilty of "anti-Soviet propaganda" as well because "Yanin's pronouncements, his praise for life in capitalist countries as slanderously opposed to life in the USSR" should be regarded as "preparations for high treason," while charges of anti-Soviet propaganda "are to be dropped as superfluous."

And then, naturally, the well-deserved punishment:

"Yanin is sentenced to 15 years of imprisonment of which he is to serve the initial seven years in prison and the rest of the term in a corrective hard labour camp, without property confiscation, and five years in exile." Valery Yanin began to serve time on July 10, 1983.

Eccentricity is not a crime

I have not dwelt on this political case at such length in order to invite young people to imitate Yanin's example, although dissidents and political prisoners are now in vogue. I realize that many of Yanin's actions appear most eccentric to put it mildly. I am not overenthusiastic about his attempts to "play chess" with an organization which prefers one move to all the others – "the move with a chessboard." I realize that it is against the law to escape from a concentration camp, let alone to organize a group escape, even if a gross miscarriage of justice has been committed against you. I know that in accordance with current Soviet legislation it is a crime to cross the border without proper authorization although I do not quite see why the exercise of one's right to leave the country, enshrined in international pacts, should carry a prison term instead of disciplinary punishment for failure to observe the due formalities.

Eccentricity is not a crime, and each of Yanin's offences carries no more than three years in jail, even according to the Soviet criminal code. Nevertheless, Valery Yanin has already spent four years in a "special" mental clinic, four-odd years in a camp, and seven years in the Chistopol jail, and he is still in for almost eight years in a camp and five years of exile. When released in the year 2003, he will have 25 years of captivity behind him.

If asked what Yanin is being taken such a cruel and evil vengeance on for, my answer will be as follows: he would have been much better off prying into our military secrets rather than busying himself with investigating cases of his jailers' corruption or standing up for his rightless and maltreated fellow-prisoners. I remember the wise advice Captain Fedotov, deputy chief of the Vladimir prison, gave us political prisoners who had launched a campaign of complaining to all the authorities. "You may write whatever you want about Soviet power, but you had better not complain about us," he told us.

I shall not ask our glorious law-enforcement agencies whether they are ashamed of "foreign agent" Valery Yanin still being held behind barbed wire. Neither shall I put this question to the Kirghizian "supreme judges": they have just rubber-stamped what they were told to rubber-stamp.

I am just calling on President Akayev of Kirghizstan: set Valery Yanin free, give him a chance to go to Turkey or to stay at home, if he wants to.

I am calling upon everyone who reads this article: please do everything in your powers lest Valery Yanin should remain a political prisoner in the 21st century. Political prisoners are our common pain and our common disgrace, and let no one plead ignorance later.

Kronid Lyubarsky,
Editor of the Bulletin *News from the USSR* and of the yearbook *A List of Political Prisoners of the USSR* (Munich)

The Gods turned out not to be tin

Tatiana Ivanova

Nowadays the noses are torn off of statues; has anyone looked into their composition?

"From house to house rumours are going around which are of the most monstrous form and which are believed without being analyzed in the slightest. The unclear hum of the street, the embarrassed faces of friends and the aimless commotion of the day and the sounds of the night all give rise to a certain depression which shackles the soul with feebleness... There is nowhere to hide from dispair and lifelessness..."

I recently recalled these words from *The Trivialities of Life* by Saltykov-Shchedrin, words which coincide perfectly with my own Weltanschauung.

As a matter of fact, many aspects of municipal folklore are applicable to today's world. Take for instance "At six o'clock I got up to dance, but there wasn't any waistband in my underpants."

And in some discombobulated way, all this tumbles about in one's pounding noggin and, speaking present-daily, can lead to unpredictable consequences.

My neighbour, a respectable lady, briskly shuffling by my door, for the sake of our mutual cordiality slowed her pace and said: "Get your passport. Go to your housing office. They're giving out ration coupons for fancy goods." But I alas had things to do at home.

Half an hour later she called from the store: "Drop everything. I'm saving you a place in the queue. We have a CHOICE! For real. They have cotton textiles and waistbands." Imagine the thoughts that run through my mind. The socialist CHOICE! For real. Textiles, waistbands.

One can of course get by without a waistband. Just get yourself a nice piece of string and wrap it around yourself in the necessary place. The people are all spoiled. To work slip-shodden and expect to have both underwear and waistbands? Everyone's gotten used to comforts – give'em waistbands. So I only have to get up and run down to the housing office and then hurry to the fancy goods store, where, can you believe it, there is a place in the queue waiting for me. Just stand in line for an hour and a half and pick whatever your heart desires. But I can't leave the house. How can one survive such a thing?

I'm holding in my hands the newspaper *Sobesednik*. That same one I was told about? Wow!

This is how it happened. My friend was out walking his dog one evening (remember how Poles started walking their dogs in the evenings when their TV got to be the way ours is today?) So, my friend was walking his dog. And his neighbour, a driver – instead of sitting at home watching the telly – was also out walking his dog. And the driver said that he himself – he himself, personally – delivered to newsstands the newspaper in which it was reported that the statue of Dzerzhinsky on Lubyanka was made of pure gold.

The driver said the newspaper was called *Sobesednik* and that it was gold taken from the Nazis, that for a long time they couldn't think of what to do with it, that they found a brilliant place for it, melted it down, made it into a monument to Dzerzhinsky overnight, covered it with copper, and melted down the real monument, those who were engaged in the process were shot or sent to prison, that it was made of pure gold inside, and in this way funds were put aside for a time when times would be tough for the country. Real tough. That's what Stalin ordered. And today those times of troubles have come. And Kaganovich has told everything to Gorbachev. There have been several tests done on the statue. It's pure gold.

Now I am holding the newspaper in my hands. I flip through the pages: yep... Gold... Melted down... Covered with copper... Reveal the secret when times would be tough... The driver was right.

Let's follow these thoughts once again. Underwear waistband – no way to get one – and the statue of Dzerzhinsky made of pure gold...

Of course I know that it was the April Fool's Day issue of *Sobesednik*. But I don't recognize this as a practical joke. It sounds like something that could have happened. One comes to understand why it stands in a visible place within site of KGB headquarters. And all around it cars motor about. And no one can walk up to the man of iron (actually gold), Dzerzhinsky.

But why only Felix Dzerzhinsky? Many a street corner is home to statues of great figures of the revolution. Why so many of them? How have we been thinking up until now? Excessive party propaganda, idol-worship, deification of political leaders... But thinking this way we are basing this on the assertion that the regime is not very intelligent. And perhaps it is too intelligent? Perhaps they are all made of gold. Maybe they are all safes. And maybe people in their offices keep their valuables in busts. And if they have a party membership card, that isn't the most valuable thing they have. Say, if you lift a plaster skull which stands on the back part of the neck (with the bottom part cut away in party style), and reach in you'll find... diamonds, gold coins, wads of dollars and underwear waistbands... If you move a bust just a little bit and turn it over, inside you'll find cigarette ration coupons, and coupons for sugar, vodka... If you cut away the leg you'll find inside a roll of textiles... Gold-gilded and having platinum ears. Nowadays the noses are torn off of statues; has anyone looked into their composition?

It's not for nothing that we have statues every few feet. They house all our riches! Now we know where they all went. Now we can get back on our feet. And the temporary difficulties associated with the acquisition of underwear waistbands will soon be overcome! ■

Vlasov and Vlasovites

We have received a lot of readers' letters in response to Leonid Mlechin's article "Vlasov and Vlasovites." The massive reaction suggests that the debate about the Russian Liberation Army is not yet over

■ It was with a feeling of indignation that I read Leonid Mlechin's article "Vlasov and Vlasovites" (No 44/90). One may not glorify the murderer and his accomplices who had betrayed their oath of alliance to their motherland and the people and brutally killed their own countrymen. The Vlasovites were duly punished, and it's a pity that some of them managed to get away with their crimes.

Gallant and loyal generals commanded our troops in the war – and glory is by right theirs. Many of them perished in combat but none of them betrayed his country. They are the ones to glorify, not the traitor Vlasov.

F.Frolov
war veteran
Vladivostok

■ The Russian patriot General Vlasov should have long been given credit for his being the only Red Army commander out of Soviet generals coorshipping Joseph Stalin and his inhumane system, who openly challenged the dictatorship foisted on the nation in 1917. He was the only one to think about the fate of his people and he chose what he believed was the lesser evil: he started cooperating with the Germans in order to destroy Stalin's dictatorship. Unfortunately, his hopes were frustrated, but all his thoughts were for the good of Russia.

V.Semyonov
Leningrad

■ I have been collecting materials about Soviet POWs for a number of years and I read Leonid Mlechin's article with great interest. The author referred to some earlier publications, such as Joachim Hoffmann's book *A History of the Vlasov Army*, the books *No-soldier Status* and *The Last Secret*. Have these books been published in Russian?

G.Plyushchev
Novorossiysk

Editors' note: Nicholas Bethell's *The Last Secret* and Hoffmann's *A History of the Vlasov Army* have been translated into Russian and printed at émigré publishing houses abroad. Like many other books on the fate of Soviet World War Two POWs these books have never been published in the Soviet Union.

■ I would like to ask Messrs. editors: Do you read what you publish at all? How can you vindicate Vlasov and Vlasovites?

There can be no justification of crimes committed by Stalin and Stalinism. But why torment the souls of the people who have lived through the ordeal of war? My war veteran's heart breaks when I read such concoctions by unscrupulous journalists. I terminate my subscription ot *New Times* in protest against Leonid Mlechin's article.

With no respect,

Alexander Nesterov
Irkutsk

■ Let me recall the concluding words of Leonid Mlechin's article: "The point at issue is not whitewashing General Vlasov and his army, but trying to understand what happened to those Russian lads who put on the German uniform..." Are you alluding to those soldiers who voluntarily surrendered to the enemy in Afghanistan, like the would-be Vlasovites had done before, in order to save their lives? They were prepared to fire on their own countrymen. True, some people were captured against their own free will, but most were only so willing to surrender. Vlasovites insisted that, the Stalin regime was strangling them. What motives did the boys in Afghanistan have when they opted to defect? That's the generation we have brought up... My father was not a Communist Party member and he was exempt from conscription, but he volunteered to go to the front and died there for his motherland, and, if you will, for Stalin. Our generation worked, studied and never begged for alms. Today young people want everything: flats, cars, fancy clothes. But they have not earned all this yet. They don't want to work, they don't want to serve in the army, they just want a sweet life. It all began with Khrushchev and today the country is almost completely ruined. Perestroika has brought the USSR to the verge of catastrophe and all that has been created through centuries has collapsed within a few years. Vlasovites and Banderists are considered heroes now, not heroes of the revolution. No one knows how it all will end: perhaps we are in for new waves of mass terror.

D.Piratov
Melitopol

June 1942. Captured General Vlasov at the 18th German Army's headquarters

■ I agree that history itself had determined the end of the Vlasovite movement and that no one can rewrite history. However, I have some remarks to make. In 1944 Vlasov said that his alliance with Hitler was a temporary and forced measure intended to topple the Stalinist regime, which was obviously a regime against the people. Why should Vlasov have rejected the Germans' assistance? For the sole reason that the word German was temporarily associated with the concept of Nazism and Hitlerism? "The Germans will go after the Stalin regime falls," Vlasov believed. I cannot say how Vlasov intended to realize his objective but he was outspoken about it. Vlasov did not want to replace Stalinism with Nazism as your author wishes to prove. I believe first we must sort out everything concerning General Vlasov and pass judgements only after this.

A.Sokolov
Cherepovets

■ The people are now caught between the two extremes and agonizingly looking for the answer to the question: "What's in

The Vlasov Army also had political departments. Propagandist officers were trained in Dabendorf

store for us? Will we see a light at the end of the tunnel?" Articles like Leonid Mlechin's do not help us find this answer.

General Denikin – the archenemy of the Bolsheviks – declined German offers of cooperation, but Vlasov did not. Why confuse the common people with such "historical" excavations?

K.Filippovich
Pyatigorsk

■ An unhappy error was made in the otherwise interesting article: "... the intelligence section of General Belov's Guards Corps under Hero of the Soviet Union Senior Lieutenant Knyazev defected to the RNPA."

Everything is incorrect here. The matter is that from the autumn of 1941 to the summer of 1942, that is until the corps broke through the German encirclement, the commanding officer of the intelligence section was Lietenant-Colonel Kononenko. There was also an officer named Knyazev and he commanded a regiment in the 1st Guards Cavalry Division.

Colonel-General Belov's book *Moscow's Behind Us* published in 1963, provided many details about these two officers' wartime experiences.

I do not know whether these people are alive now, but I know that both of them had drained the bitter cup of war. They did not betray their motherland and *New Times* should make a correction so as not to compare honest soldiers to traitors who will never be forgiven.

Valery Vysotsky,
correspondent for
Lesnaya Gazeta,
in Byelorussia
Minsk

■ You ask a question: "What was General Vlasov?" There is no need to ask: all Soviet people know General Vlasov was a black traitor. It is stupid to try and justify Vlasov's betrayal by referring to his opposition to Stalinism. Whom did Soviet soldiers defend in that war? The people were fighting Nazis, defending themselves, not Stalin or the Bolsheviks. My first husband was captured in December 1941, but he never joined Vlasov's army of traitors. My second husband, a war invalid, suffers from war wounds even today. Making General Vlasov a hero today you encourage all former Nazi collaborators to breathe freely. This is impermissible!

A.Kucheryayeva
the Krasnoyarsk Territory

■ The introductory note to Leonid Mlechin's article says: "Traitors will be traitors." I fully agree with this. However, Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *GULAG Archipelago* presents General Vlasov in a more favourable light. I cannot believe a Russian writer could have written this...

I want to tell you about my meeting with one former White Guardsman. They sent him to assist me in land prospecting for the construction of the Sliven-Yelena road in 1939–40. He had a typical old-timer's face: snow-white hair, handlebar moustache and a beard neatly parted in the middle. He was a Cossack ataman, Bogdan Moroz, and in Bulgaria he represented the successor to the Russian Throne, the Paris-based Prince Vladimir. Moroz participated in the Russo–Japanese war of 1904–05: at that time he was a very young officer. He hated Stalin and called him a theif, a tyrant and a regicide. In 1941 Moroz published in a newspaper in Sofia an appeal to all Russians based in Bulgaria in which he called on them to enlist in the Russian regiment which would save Russia from the Bolsheviks by fighting side by side with the Germans. I met him once again in the summer of 1942 in Sofia. His attitude had changed dramatically by that time. This is what Moroz told me: "We believed Hitler would liberate us and he had enslaved us. We were finally disillusioned when the Germans turned Leo Tolstoy's home at Yasnaya Polyana into stables for Wehrmacht horses. This is an unforgivable blasphemy. Today I am prepared to join Stalin in fighting Hitler for the liberation of our sacred land." In his words, I felt the presence of the Russian soul in which love for one's motherland is above all.

Georgi Brankov
Academician
Sofia, Bulgaria

■ I am happy that *New Times* has made an attempt to sort things out regarding the fate of General Vlasov, without either smearing him with mud, or making him a martyr. The author did not depict Vlasov as a black traitor and was right in believing that everything that happened to General Vlasov and his army was a part of this country's national history.

Vlasov was one of the ablest Red Army commanders and a saviour of Moscow. He was then transferred to command the 2nd Shock Army trying to break the blockade of Leningrad. Stalin pressed this Army to attack without sufficient ammunition, food or air support. The Vlasov Army was destroyed. In the *GULAG Archipelago* Solzhenitsyn writes: "Treason to the Motherland? Of course there was treason to the Motherland. But it was Stalin who committed it. Treason does not always mean selling oneself for money."

The German military who patronized Vlasov promised him democratic freedoms, the abolition of kolkhozes and forced labour. The General must have believed that old democratic Russia could yet be restored. Speaking in Russian cities, he openly said that National Socialism was inacceptable to Russia but it was impossible to crush the Bolsheviks without the German help. Vlasov believed those Germans who promised him a free Russia without Bolshevism. It was his objective as well. Speaking of the Russian Liberation Movement, Solzhenitsyn writes: "Since its very inception it had been marked as yet another sacrifice for the 1917 Revolution altar. The very first winter of the war killed several million Soviet POWs and started the endless chain of death beginning in the summer of 1941 when unarmed and untrained militias were committed in battle to save Bolshevism.

A.Samoilov
Moscow

FROM THE XXth CENTURY POLITICAL THOUGHT

Introduced by *New Times* analyst **Rostislav Zolotaryov**

The writer Mark Aldanov is known to the Soviet reader: his historical novels appear in *Druzhba Narodov* and other literary journals, and his *Selected Works* are coming out soon. Aldanov the essayist is less known here, although some of his essays also appear in our press. However, we know next to nothing about Aldanov the philosopher. Although Aldanov's political philosophy is manifest in his prose, we have decided to shed more light on this aspect of his heritage by printing two essays from his collection of articles, *Ogon i Dym* ("Fire and Smoke"), published in Paris in 1922. We have already printed an essay from that book (see *NT*, NO. 38, 1990). The essay we have selected for today's issue sound quite topical, but Aldanov's irony will prevent the reader from drawing any trivial parallels.

It was irony alone that helped Aldanov – a writer and a scientist (he was a qualified chemist, and an outstanding one at that) to brighten up his life in emigration where he found himself in 1919. Let me make it clear, however, that irony was not a frame of mind or a moral stance, it was a method of comprehending the world around him, a kind of Socratic irony. Irony for the source of energy for the time machine which carried the writer and the philosopher so easily from "station" to "station" of an almost 200-year-long period of Europe history starting before the French Revolution and ending in the World War II period. Such is the span of time covered by his numerous historical novels, miniatures and profiles of statesmen which merge into a single narrative stream.

Notably, European history as Aldanov describes it lacks epic splendour and ecumenical proportions. Every event is individual, every personality is unique, and repetitions are accidental. That is, accidental to the extent to which the flow of time is changeable. The author's approach permits him to be on familiar terms with any historical personage in his essays – except Clio, the Muse of History. The philosopher knows her temper only too well to play the kind of game with her he does with Napoleon, Stalin, members of the Narodnaya Volya (People's Will) organization and Russian Grand Dukes... Such a game is possible only because the outcome of the big game has not been decided yet – the big game in which all these heroes turn out to be mere Alcibiadeses always prepared to chop their dog's tail off. The bitterness of Aldanov's irony of history consists in that history is made by people, millions of people, quite often against their will. People, not Pavlovian dogs who prove, by their vivisected oesophagi and stomachs, the absolute correctness of the teaching on conditioned reflexes...

History repeats itself

Mark Aldanov (1886–1957)

In 1725, Giovanni Vico raised in his famous book *Prinzipi di una scienza nuova* (Principles of New Science. – **Ed.)** the issue of the essence of world progress. History, the Italian philosopher maintained, kept repeating itself. It is a regular and perpetually recurrent succession of three periods – divine, heroic and human... All this confused and mediocre book is remarkable for is the idea it contains of history ever repeating itself... In the light of current developments, however, this idea is of special interest. Vico's favourite distinguishing criteria – gods and myths (the first period), heroes and barbarism (second) and civilization (third) seem to have mixed up somewhat. Now there is no telling where barbarism ends and civilization begins; as to gods and heroes opinions vary considerably; and there are enough myths to drive one crazy: in fact, everything has turned to by a myth nowadays beginning with the "war of liberation" and ending with "the dictatorship of the proletariat." Even the language itself has become queerly mythical: what appears in writing as "self-determination of nations" should be read as "Baku kerosene."

I recall a talk I had with the late G.A. Lopatin...

"As a child, I was brought up by a nanny who lived to be 110. In her early youth, that worthy woman had met Pugachev who had even given her a five-copeck coin. What would you say to that? We are talking about Lenin's Communist republic, and Pugachev and I had common friends."

I told Gherman Alexandrovich that if the nanny had been still alive, she wouldn't have felt much of a difference: the Communist "new order" might have reminded her of Pugachev time.

Lopatin, who had hated Bolsheviks' guts, did not agree with me. That extraordinary man who had spent thirty years in jails and lived through three abortive revolutions (only to live to see the Soviet system, oh my God!) firmly believed in the steady onward march of progress in general and of the Russian liberation movement, in particular.

"History cannot turn back," he had said. "Where is it to go back to? To prieval woods? The British had long chopped them down."

What Lopatin's reasonings boiled down to was that scientific progress ruled out any reversals of history.

Arguing over this subject wouldn't have been of much use, of course. The impossibility of social regress is a religious dogma. Like any religious dogma, it can be put on a certain logical basis. It is true, that besides sociological theorems and historical generalizations there are also living people who die in death traps and on the barbs of wire entanglements, on board the *Lusitania* sunk by a German U-boat, inside a German U-boat caught in a British net, who are tortured to death and shot by extraordinary commission and counterintelligence excutionists, gunned down by the Chinese and when "trying to escape." All this has no effect on sociological theorems, any more than the work of Sanson's guillotine had on Lalande's tables.

The theorem on the impossibility of social regress can be shattered by only one thing: our full freedom to choose the historical perspective. What is to be compared – and with what? Our time with the Middle Ages? Why, then, not compare the Middle Ages with the Golden Age of Hellenic culture?

The social problems we are now concerned about were in the

– forefront of Athenians' minds over two thousand years ago. The famous speech in which Pericles, over the graves of the warriors who had fallen at the beginning of the Peloponessian War, described the essence and objectives of a democratic regime, may well remain, without a single word changed, an ideal programme speech for any modern politician. Not only in its logic and clarity of social concepts, but also in the spirit of tolerance permeating it and in the nobleness of its tone with regard to the enemy it is immeasurable superior to all that modern Pericleses prattled in various languages during the last war. In the sphere of abstract thinking, ancient Greeks also came close to modern scientific problems...

And then everything collapsed. A succession of sorcery trials (the last one took place in 1823) and autos-da-fe began, demonology became common... *Malleus Maleficarum* ("Witches Hammer" – **Ed.**) was written by Johann Sprenger, the greatest authority of that epoch, who exposed and annihilated witches as zealously as Lenin does capitalists. There was distinctive medieval culture, of course. Now it is fashionable to reassess it but this fashion will pass. The facts will remain.

The worst comes to the worst if an idea, and not a clever one at that, suddenly grips the masses

History has reversed its course as if in spite of all its theoreticians. In view of what is going on now, this gives rise to bloomy thoughts.

The applecart has been upset. Instead of the Fourteen Points (peace proposals by US President Woodrow Wilson which the Decree of Peace was largely copied from. – **Ed.**) – one more humane than the other, the Points all the gullible people the world over swore by – the 15th Point prevailed: woe to the defeated. It was not Wilson but Brenn (the well-known machine-gun designer. – **Ed.**) who became the philosopher of the great liberation war. And from the great liberation revolution, the gullible may now draw the conclusion that the extreme Left-wing revolutionaries are not at all different from the extreme Right-wing pogrom-makers...

True, Lenin is convinced that the future is with him. Tomas de Torquemada (the notorious Great Inquisitor. – **Ed.**) had made similar claims to the future five centuries ago. He regarded *Ordonnanzas de Los Inquisidores* as a profoundly progresive work of philosophical and political thought. He was also an internationalist and he, too, asserted that he wanted world peace, tranquility and universal happiness. Besides, he did not execute too many people – just 8,000 over 11 years of his rule, at the most hostile estimate. This figure now looks ridiculously small: the Bolsheviks dispatch more in a month.

Quite possibly, the current events – in the moral sphere, at any rate – can also be interpreted as Vico's "repetition," temporary, of course, but most sinister. Humane people have brought their humane ideas to this age of blood and iron, to this age of Lenins and Ludendorffs. Life has mocked their efforts. So much the worse for the humane people and, of course, for life. Many broke their necks trying to accomplish the notorious jump "from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom."

After the Athenians had stopped talking about Alcibiades' magnificent dog, he chopped its tail off... The advertizing method chosen by the Greek hero in his youth was quite harmless, it made no difference to anyone – except for the dog, of course. The most amazing thing about the incident was that the man who resorted to such a publicity stunt was generously endowed by nature with everything – good looks, intelligence, eloquence, vigour, courage, education...

Long before the recent revolution Mr. Muretov, a gifted Russian essayist, quoted the following prophetic verses:

Our forebears spent their lives to gather
Great Russia slowly, part by part,
They worked to put our Rus together,
And we shall take our Rus apart.

The poet's prediction has come true – only for the time being, of course. Russia will gather up its pieces again, there is no doubt about it. But why have "we" taken Russia *apart?* That is the question *serious* historians will tackle and seek the answers in numerous "isms": centralism, Bolshevism, separatism, etc. For the eyewitnesses, however, this will hardly be convincing enough. Who could have thought that all over Russia (including even the Yaroslavl Province which have also begun to show separatist tendencies) there are such enormous centrifugal forces? Less serious historians will probably explain the situation by the fact that there have been a great multitude of small and tiny Alcibiadeses in Russia who didn't know which dog's tail to chop off.

Of all kind of separatism, this author has seen, with his own eyes, just one – Ukrainian. The Ukrainian-language papers (their Ukrainian was shockingly bad, experts told me) called that brand of separatism a phenomenon of enormous historic importance. Its opponents reckoned with it as a fact which had to be "treated most carefully and thoughtfully." Curiously, Ukrainian separatism has awed even the Bolshevik – who are notorious for their disregard of genuine history – into founding the Ukrainian Soviet Republic (Soviet, it is true, but Ukrainian nevertheless). Gossips, who also contribute to recorded history in their small way, take the "fact of enormous historic importance" quite differently and pointed out, with good reason, that but for Ukrainian separatism no one would have known and lavished money and honours on Premier Golubovich and "General" Petlyura. In time, much will change, of course. We shall probably learn (and there already are some indications of the fact) that 99 percent of the separatists have been such only temporarily, for long-term tactical considerations while remaining, in their heart of hearts, firm adherents of a "single and indivisible" Russia... Gossips will draw up in alphabetical order, a list of obscure persons who have been ministers, presidents and ambassadors. From the viewpoint of "popular history" this will be a sufficient explanation of what has happened.

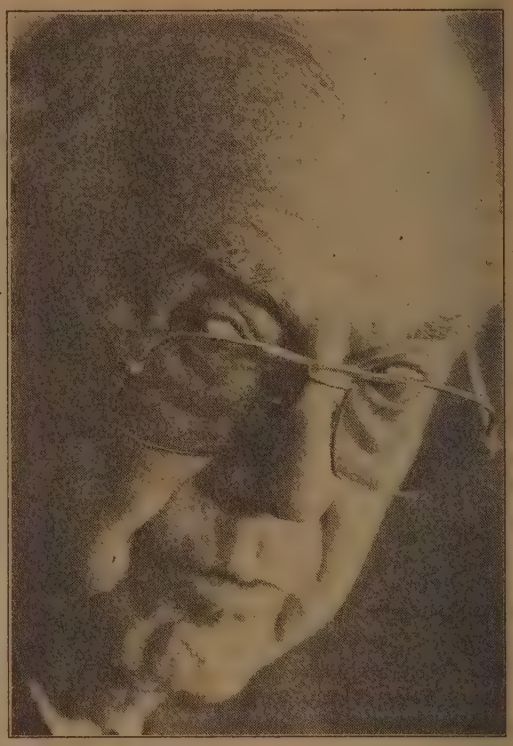
Psychologically, what we have here is a picture similar to that of Bolshevism: to think of all the crooks eager to breathe new life into imperfect humankind! Of all the Alcibiadeses eager to find uses for their political and other talents!

Nowhere has advertising demagogy and demagogical advertising been such a success all over the world as they are now...

Wouldn't we have felt much safer if modern Alcibiadeses had got themselves dogs?

"Greeneland" left without the king

The most serious of popular writers and the most popular of serious writers dies



Graham Greene: "I am bad with words."
Photo by Alexander Karzanov

"I put the muzzle of the revolver in my right ear and pulled the trigger. There was a minute click, and looking down at the chamber I could see that the charge had moved into place. I remember an extraordinary sense of jubilation. It was as if a light had been turned on. My heart was knocking in its cage, and I felt that life contained an infinite number of possibilities. The odd thing about this experience was that it was repeated several times. At fairly long intervals I found myself craving for the drug... Slowly the effect of the drug wore off – I lost the sense of jubilation, I began to gain from the experience only the crude kick of excitement. It was like the difference between love and lust."

That was how Graham Greene described his "Russian roulette" experiments. Fortunately, the cartridge had never been aligned with the bore when the writer pulled the trigger thanks to which the readers got almost 30 amazing books – "Greeneland" Graham Greene had created over 86 years of his highly eventful life which came to end on April 3.

The man within

Graham Greene is, perhaps, harder to define and categorize than any other writer. He bewildered British literary critics who despised "low tastes" until someone found the paradoxical formula: "Graham is a very popular writer; nevertheless he is also, strange to say, a good writer." He puzzled our own custodians of "ideological principles" who had taken him, at one time, for a new Romain Rolland. He was hailed as a critic of America and of London's policy towards Ulster, as a friend of revolutionaries and Left-wing dictators – and then he suddenly "spoiled it all" by condemning human rights violations in the USSR or entering upon religious quests to the Marxists' utter displeasure. It was all very simple, really – Graham Greene had no desire to adapt to anyone except God and himself.

As a matter of course, his relations with God and himself were far from simple: the "Russian roulette" story which had all but deprived us of one of the 20th century's outstanding authors is most meaningful. The agonizing sense of dissatisfaction (averse to high-falutin' words, Graham Greene himself referred to it as a "boredom sickness") drove him from faith to faith and from place to place: now to Africa, now to Latin America, now to Asia, now to France where he spent the last twenty five years of his life. At the age of 18, he turned to socialism but got disappointed with it in six weeks and quit the Communist party forever. Then came the turn of Catholicism of which he was a zealot for a long time – which, however, did not prevent him from embarrassing the Holy See by his views which were far from religious dogmas. He even tried his hand at espionage and engaged in it for as long as three years, but the sense of dissatisfaction did not pass. The name of his first novel – *The Man Within* – is a quotation from Thomas Browne: "There is another man within me that's angry with me." In general, he regarded "the divided mind, the uneasy conscience, and the sense of personal failure" the most essential feature of Christian civilization – even, judging by everything, as its great merit. In a sense, all his books are about this or, more precisely, about sympathy with this failure, with this dommed search for love and loyalty. Although this unusual creed has little if anything to do with dialectical materialism, attempts were made here to put it to ideological use.

No Nobel Prize

Recently, I came across the old book entitled *The Heart of the Mat-*

ter published way back in 1961 (number of copies not indicated). I hadn't suspected that my favourite novel by Graham Greene was published in the USSR, and so long ago, too. Frankly, the choice, our publishers' choice surprised me: some critics call the book "the most Catholic one" and others, "the most anti-Catholic one" by Greene. At one time, the world's Catholics all but came to grips and staged demonstrations of protest against the book which cut them to the quick. In their opinion, the book hinged on the following question: how to treat a person who, out of compassion for a sufferer, is prepared to sacrifice not only his earthly existence (it's no big deal!) but his most valuable possession – the immortality of his soul, eternity, i.e. to commit the horrible sin of suicide? Does such supreme, even though sacrilegious, form of self-sacrifice deserve nothing but censure? There are other interpretations of *The Heart of the Matter*, some discern other puzzles in it, but what the book definitely lacks is simple answers to eternal questions. Our critics did find such answers, however – one reads in the preface to the Soviet edition that the novel exposes "the bankruptcy of the colonial system!" You see, the scene of the novel is set in Africa and the local people are pictured with sympathy, even though sketchily.

There is no denying that all the books by Graham Greene are permeated with sympathy and compassion – true, not only for blacks, but for whites as well, even for colonialists and spies. He feels for Pinkie, a young gangster of *The Brighton Rock* who commits the horrible sin of marrying a girl madly in love with him for the only purpose of preventing her from giving evidence against his gang in court; for Scobie, a dedicated Catholic, who finally takes his own life; even for a man who buys someone else's life in order to save his own only to realize that a life thus bought is so wretched and agonizing that even death, with a prospect of eternal damnation is preferable to it (*The Tenth Man*). Graham Green sympathizes even with the terrorists of *The Honorary Consul*, even with Pyle of *The Quiet American*, that outstanding conformist without fear and reproach, that patriot "par excellence" who has substituted almost all his human emotions by "loyalty to his country." Graham Greene could see the world through the eyes of people who were poles apart because he was endowed with an amazing, almost supernatural, gift for "living the part." This probably accounts for his literary skill, for his precise choice of words, intonations and cadences which carry the reader away from the very beginning and compel him to believe in the reality of the most exotic and most schizophrenic character. Doesn't every mortal happen to feel this agonizing duality, this unbearable temptation to betray what he loves? According to Greene, every life is tragical because one invariably comes up against the "appalling strangeness of the mercy of God". This may sound blasphemous to others, but in literary reality Greene's message reaches believers and convinced atheists alike.

Graham Greene was often described as "the most serious of popular writers, and the most popular of serious writers." He was certainly one of the best known men of letters recognized as a classic in his lifetime. Surprisingly, however, he had never received a Nobel Prize. He didn't seem upset by the fact and said: "It's a lottery..." In general he was strangely indifferent to honours and awards – but took pride in having won two anonymous contests of parodies on Graham Greene!

A neutralized Greene

Graham Greene is not too well known in our country, I am afraid. His best novels have not been published at all or came out in small editions, and the Soviet readers are totally ignorant of his journalism which I regard as phenomenal. For years, we have been "served" a neutralized, expurgated, i.e. "sham" Greene. Therefore our readers would hardly understand why Kim Philby, who missed his native culture a lot, hungered for the writer's company. When asked what he would have wished for if he had had a magic wand, ourf superspy replied: I'd wish for "Graman Greene on the other side of the table, and a bottle of wine between us."

They had little chance of seeing one another in their declining years – not only because Britain was "out of bounds" for Philby but also because Graham Greene, long flirted with by our powers-that-were, suddenly got into their bad books and stayed there until the mid-eighties. Why? I think the answer to this question is to be found in one of Greene's public statements. Made long ago, the statement accurately reflected his socio-political and, to a certain extent, literary ideals which he – although proverbially changeable and easily carried away – remained faithful to all his life. And so, the time was June, 1969; the place: the University of Hamburg and the subject: Shakespeare, literature, the writer and the state.

"So we think in our own day of Pasternak, Daniel, Sinyavsky, Ginsberg, Solzhenitsyn in Russia; Roa Bastos a fugitive from Paraguay; George Seferis making his brave protest in Greece. On this roll of honour the name of Shakespeare does not appear, and yet, and yet... I like to believe that if he had lived a little longer, his name would not have been absent...

"The writer is driven by his own vocation to be a protestant in a Catholic society, a catholic in a Protestant one, to see the virtues of the capitalist in a Communist society, of the communist in a Capitalist state...

"A great German theologian (Bonhoeffer)confronted, in the worst days of our lifetime, this issue of loyalty and disloyalty: 'Christians in Germany,' he wrote, 'will face the terrible alternative of either willing the defeat of their nation in order that Christian civilization may survive, or willing the victory of their nation and thereby destroying our civilization. I know which of those alternatives I must choose.'

"Dietrich Bonhoeffer chose to be hanged like our English poet Southwell. He is a greater hero for the wirter than Shakespeare. Perhaps the deepest tragedy Shakespeare lived was his own: the blind eye exchanged for the coat of arms, the prudent tongue for the friendships at Court and the great house at Stratford."

Graham Greene himself could be accused of anything but conformism and time-serving. He had never made peace with himself till the end of his days. "I am bad with words," he complained when already well advanced in years. When asked about his main aim in life, he would reply: "To write a good book."

Andrei Ostalsky

Former Soviet secret service officer Oleg Gordievsky who defected to the West said that 60-year old **Nikolajs Neilands,** People's Deputy of the USSR from Latvia, member of the USSR Supreme Committee for International Affairs, was a KGB agent attached to Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme. Nikolajs Neilands, a journalist and diplomat, First Deputy Foreign Minister of Latvia before the summer of 1990, is known for his reasonable and balanced statements on the Baltic issue. Some colleagues were ready to accuse him rather of contacts with the West than of work for the KGB. In an interview by the newspaper *Neatkariga Cina* Neilands called Gordiyevsky's allegations a "mixture of imagination and lies":

"When I was posted to Stockholm as head of the APN bureau, I had indeed good, cordial relations with Palme, even though he was Prime Minister and I was an ordinary journalist. His grandfather was born in Latvia and was Rector of the Riga Polytechnic Institute. I played tennis with Palme, met him at football and hockey competitions, and conversed with him for hours on. Palme asked me quite often what was happening in Moscow, what the Soviet periodicals were writing. He showed a negative attitude towards the invasion of Czecho-Slovakia and Afghanistan, but was tactful enough not to demand that I also criticize these actions. I have never been a KGB agent, did not give a written undertaking for collaboration and I was made no such proposal."

* * *

Armando Valladares, 54-year-old head of the US delegation to the UN Commission on Human Rights, appointed three years ago, has fulfilled at last the mission he was entrusted with by Washington: he succeeded in including his former homeland – Cuba on the list of the countries in which the situation with regard to human rights is particularly alarming.

Armando Valladares was 23 years old when Fidel Castro overthrew Batista. He managed to work for a short while at the Ministry of Communications and then was arrested. As to the government version, for serving in Batista police and for being engaged in terrorist activities. But according to the Valladares version, this was for doubts about communist ideology and the correctness of the path chosen by revolutionary Cuba. He was sentenced to 30 years' imprisonment and sent to the jail where Fidel Castro served a short term under Batista.

Valladares was set free 22 years later, spending in prison 8 years fewer than the actual sentence called for because human rights organizations stood up for him. Amnesty International does not back up terrorists, therefore its preparedness to take up the Valladares case was regarded by the world as a confirmation of his innocence. He sent out from prison his poems written in captivity, and the world public demanded that the poet and political prisoner be set free. Valladares was ultimately liberated and allowed to emigrate. Although he lives permanently in Spain and his English is not so fluent, the US State Department gave him the rank of ambassador and appointed him head of the delegation in Geneva.

Valladares wrote a book of reminiscences about years spent in prison. In former years Valladares failed to receive the required number of votes necessary for passing a resolution condemning Cuba. This year the situation has changed: former socialist and even some Latin American countries voted against Cuba.

* * *

A hairdresser knows about the sexual life of his permanent customers much more than their doctors, colleagues and, moreover, family members. Having opened a beauty parlour in Columbia, South Carolina, 42-year-old **DiAna DiAna** learned with horror that her customers were mainly Black Americans going in for sex with no precautionary measures. Diana ap-

Film director not liked in China

The Chinese people also do not like the cheap amorous films and still more cheap karate movies which have recently been shown on Soviet TV. Over the past few years the number of moviegoers has fallen off by more than 40 percent. Nevertheless, there were also masterpieces. The film *Ju Dou* directed by **Zhang Yimou** was awarded in 1990 a special prize at the Cannes Film Festival and this year it has been nominated for the Best Foreign Film Oscar. But Beijing bureaucrats did everything to yank the picture from contention for Hollywood prize.

Set in the turbulent 1920s, Ju Dou tells the tale of a young peasant woman who is bought by a wealthy old man desperate for a son to inherit his property. When his impotence prevents impregnation, the old man takes his frustration out on his wife. Then Ju Dou falls in love with her husband's newphew and bears his son. Though the old man drowns there is no happy ending: Chinese tradition discourages widows from remarrying. In the end, Ju Dou's grown-up son, angered by talk of his mother's infidelity, kills her lover – his real father.

Forty-year old Zhang's previous film, which won a prize at the 1988 Berlin Festival and attracted 200 million viewers at home, also aroused the discontent of Beijing's high-ranking officials. Among the reasons they mentioned were the bed scenes that fazed censors and the fact that the main part was played (just as in *Ju Dou*) by the director's lover of whom he, a married man, makes no secret.

Zhang is now shooting the film *Raise the Red Lantern* in which one of the main characters is again an old man depicted deliberately as a blur. The audience cannot even see his face clearly; they see only his shadows. The film tracks the intrigue among four concubines battling for the affection of another old moneybag... Western critics note that by depicting permanently the image of a decrepit slave-owner tyrant the director dooms himself to the dislike of not so young leaders of China.

During the Cultural Revolution, Zhang spent three years in the countryside undergoing "ideological reshaping." They were followed by jobs as a porter and a janitor in order to save money and buy a camera. Now he is a director whose films are financed by Japanese and Taiwanese companies. But Zhang cannot even see himself living abroad. "Where could I find a place overseas that could be used as a setting for the Chinese countryside?" he asks.

pealed to the local papers to print information about AIDS and about the need for using condoms, but in traditionally conservative South Carolina, she ran into a wall of incomprehension. They explained to her that "the inhubitants of the state don't have to know about AIDS, since they are not exposed to AIDS."

After that, DiAna began to act on her own. She used customers' tips to buy condoms and, having packed them nicely in a souvenir paper, presented to female customers. "Women are ashamed", she says, "to take a 'bare' condom, but in a nice paper packaging they take them with pleasure."

In DiAna's beauty parlour one can now watch a video clip, as one's hair dries, about the danger of AIDS and ways to avoid this danger. One can even participate in mini-competitions and games on the same subject. And although state authorities refuse to subsidize DiAna's undertaking, saying that her methods "sexually excite youth," many residents of the township would not mind having a haircut and taking home with a useful gift...

* * *

Psychiatrists believe that 34-year-old **Aileen Carol Wuornos** of the USA, decided to avenge the world for all injustices she went through.

Last year Wuornos, a professional prostitute, hitch-hiked seven times on highway – 75 in Florida, and seven men who stopped their cars to give the nice blonde a lift, did not get home.

On January 9, the "I–75 killer" was arrested, but before she was charged, the criminal signed a contract with a Hollywood producer for making a film about her life. The producer assures that his aim is to save those who may be led astray, but movie-goers are expecting to see how she did what she did.

* * *

During the Iraqi campaign **Paul Beaver,** publisher of *Jane's Defence Weekly* (Britain), unexpectedly became very popular.

Beaver heads a staff of 15 experts in military technology. They print in the magazine information supplied by military departments of different countries. Traditionally no information about military hardware can be published before *Jane's Defence* does. Hence, its subscribers have always

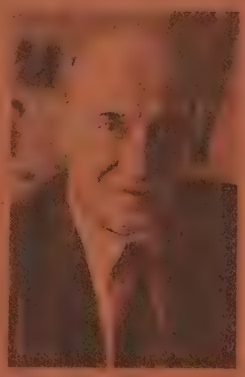
been the military departments of the USA, Britain, Israel and even the Soviet Union. The Pentagon receives every week 604 copies of the magazine. Before the Gulf war 45 copies were sent to Iraq, but now the magazine is not read there.

Shortly before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait *Jane's Defence* published a detailed list of Iraqi armaments including information about Soviet SCUDs supplied to Hussein. When hostilities broke out the magazine and the Editor-in-Chief personally were showered with questions by journalists from other publications, who suddenly had to write about things they understood poorly.

Paul Beaver was the first British journalist to be invited by the USSR Ministry of Defence to visit this country and see Soviet military hardware.

* * *

Writer on Babii Yar history



Returning to Kiev in 1944 from evacuation thirteen-year-old **Alexander Shlaen** learned that nearly all his relatives were lying in the grave at Babii Yar. He swore to his mother to do everything in his power so that people never forgot this tragedy.

Alexander Shlaen has devoted more than 20 years to studying the history of Babii Yar. Becoming a director, he made a film, wrote a book 10 years ago and there is hope that at last it will be published. He went through many trials – he was discharged from office, accused of being a Zionist, he was brought to trial and his house was searched.

Now he is chairman of the Soviet public centre Babii Yar. In 1991 it will be 50 years since the first shooting at Babii Yar. At the beginning of September 1941, approximately 60,000 Jews were shot there and in the few days that followed another 60,000 including non-Jews.

"Babii Yar has become a symbol of Jewish martyrdom," says Alexander Shlaen. "At the same time Babii Yar is an enormous common grave where people of different nationalities are buried. For decades this tragedy had been hushed up. But this year, September 29 – the day of the first shooting – has been declared by the Kiev city Soviet a Day of Mourning. Banners with black crape will be flown at half-mast. Public prayers will be performed in the churches of all religions.

The Ukrainian government has set up a committee for preparing for and holding the 50th anniversary of the Babii Yar tragedy with A. Shlaen appointed its deputy chairmen. A competition has been announced for the design of a memorial complex, conferences, exhibitions and film shows will be arranged, a meeting will take place in Kiev on September 29 and a Requiem will be played.

"Our aim is not only to revive the historical truth and to perpetuate the memory of the victims. We want people to understand what genocide and interethnic discord in any form can lead to. Children make up nearly 50% percent of those killed in Babii Yar and of the six million Jewish victims of genocide.

The Soviet public centre Babii Yar appeals for financial help in constructing the memorial complex in Babii Yar. Settlement account No. 1700339 in OPERU of the Ukrainian Zhilsotsbank, MFO 300023, Kiev, USSR. Hard currency account No. 700219 in the Kiev department of Vneshekonombank of the USSR, MFO 805119, Kiev, USSR.

No-stress sex

In Helsinki people worry that by the year 3000 there will be only two Finns left

Every adult knows where babies come from, but not everyone knows how they are actually made by their parents. As long as only the husband and wife worry about their lack of children, the sadness felt is confined to that family. But when an entire country is faced with the over-ageing or even a fall in its population, the term "demographic tragedy" does not seem an overstatement. It is a problem which as a rule faces only developed nations, Finland included.

There exists a traditional set of social and economic means employed to reverse such trends, but so far no radical change for the better has ever been achieved. Women are guaranteed 285 days free of work during pregnancy and receive 80 percent of their normal pay. Families receive financial assistance from the state for every newborn child and regularly receive benefits to help support each child. There exist nursery schools and kindergartens, a system of visiting nurses and nannines and many other similar support services. What is lacking is growth in the Finnish population. The average age of Finns has increased markedly,, which means a greater percentage of the populace will be retired, raising questions of who is going to feed them as well as who will man the factories and the computer terminals of the country? And Prime Minister Harri Holkeri has sounded the alarm.

"If the present negative growth rate remains unchanged, then by the year 3000 there will be only two Finns left," he jests seriously. Other politicians as well have joined in the search for a solution to Finland's demographic crisis. Specialists have begun to look for new and unorthodox approaches to solving the problem.

What has been determined is that the small population of youth capable of producing offspring are in no hurry to do so as they concentrate their efforts on achieving a good education and financial independence.

Drawing by Victor Bogorad

Forcing a Finn to do something against his or her will is something impossible to do. Thus one must look for a solution among those slightly older. Here it has been shown that among the middle-aged population, many are simply not capable of bearing offspring despite the fact that they often wish to do so and have the means of providing for children (raising a child to maturity runs one in millions).

Holidays for making life

The most fervent proponents of taking a new approach to the issue in the Ministry of Public Health say that Finns have simply grown tired of work, hassles and other unavoidable features of contemporary life and thus simply couldn't be bothered to have sex. And without this, of course, there can be no children. Therefore it is an issue that must be talked about openly in order to find a solution to the problem. Measures including the setting up of special holidays for parents on which they might free themselves of the concerns of everyday existence and get down to the more important business of making life have been proposed. Stress-free sex – that was the essence of the radical idea.

So far this idea has not been put into practice, both for economic reasons and out of the fear that that would lead to sexual shirkers who would have a holiday but would not fulfil this requirement of the day. However, the suggestion by experts that eroticism be granted a more visible place in society has

been better received. It has been decided that culture, the mass media and even the very environment be made more interesting erotically. In general, research has shown that human sexuality is a multifaceted phenomenon, one encompassing love, eroticism, sex and pornography. And if this truly is the case, society should use it in all of its variety and drop its puritanical mentality. In this regard it was newspapers who lead the way by including in their pages frank discussion on the "innermost."

As it is women who in maturity most acutely feel the absence of children in their lives, an emphasis is placed on appealing to the passive "stronger" sex. In Finland in all sincerity and openness it is admitted that men often neglect their duties as a husband even on weekends, preferring television or alcohol to sex. In order to help those who cannot have sex, doctors feel perfectly comfortable in discussing such topics as improving one's virility and curing impotency.

Getting at the heart of the issue

"Not only women but also men age and their level of sexual activity decreases," professor Risto Pelkonen tells us. "This leads to the appearance of difficulties in adaptation which are accompanied by psychological and somatic disorders. But all this can be fixed at the hormonal level."

"The problem of virility is a natural problem which arises when males reach the ages of 50-70, but sometimes it arises even in one's forties," adds his colleague Mirja Ruutu. "In Finland we are of the opinion that one can speak of impotency if a man fails to successfully carry out the sexual act 75 percent of the time."

The latter is given particular attention by specialists as many husbands despair too early and give up attempts to have children. Incidentally, the campaign to increase the birth rate in Finland does not necessarily limit this only to families. Single mothers are not looked down upon and often they are helped out by male friends. And even married men having children on the outside are not considered something out of the ordinary.

It sometimes is the case that a couple wants to have children but simply physically cannot. In these cases, married couples are invited to come to Väestölütto, the demographic problems centre. There they receive expert advice and even medical help. The centre has its own sperm bank which houses the sperm of 60 donors. Unfortunately the sperm from a single donor can be used for only 5 conceptions and each attempted conception requires 12 tries. Therefore the centre calls upon young, healthy men (their health is determined by an examination) to donate their sperm. They are guaranteed complete anonymity and are paid a small sum. The donor is never told the name of the parents and children will never learn the story of their birth.

If there exists a demand, a society having a market economy will seek to fulfil that demand. For those who for one reason or another do not wish to come to the centre there are special centres of doctors and specialists who issued encouraging statements at a seminar in Helsinki about the effectiveness of a personalized approach to childless couples and single parents.

"I always tell patients that they will be successful if they are just patient," Carl-Johan Johansson said in his speech given during the seminar. "And in the majority of cases the problem is solved."

Alexander Polyukhov,
our own correspondent

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Know our own

We are living through a period of an aggravated struggle between "our" unity and our opposites

The word "ours" said by Nevzorov, cannot be taken back. It will continue to bear fruit, spread, insult people...

It should be noted that the word "our" is a rich concept, though it is not new: "They are beating our own!", "ours are in the city," "ours won 2:0", "one can spot our people in Europe instantly", "ours is the righteous cause", "whoever is not with us, is our enemy."

But if some are "our own" then others must be "not ours." Whose? "Blokes, whose are you? Who is leading you into battle?"

In the midst of a flood of pleasant calls for reconciliation, consolidation, and round-table negotiations, where only mineral water is drunk what is most unusual is this division into "ours" and "not ours." Incidentally, the words "not ours" is not stated directly, it is only implied. There is still the hope of coming up with "not quite ours." Just a bit. And only sometimes. Yes, its our food. It's our way of obtaining it. Our method of multiplying is ours and common to all. The way of thinking though, is not. It's not our way. And not that of our grandfathers.

And in an instant a language barrier is thrown up: though they speak the same language they are not able to understand one another. And again only sometimes: when people swear or mutually "insult the honour and dignity," they read words into what others say. When it is absolutely necessary to understand our opponent – the great and powerful Russian language simply doesn't suffice. And so what results is something that is neither ours nor theirs.

Drawing by Victor Bogorad

Of course, ours are not in favour of bloodshed. They simply want the 300 million of us to be "us." After all they once all really were! It was a coalition of "ours" and "not quite ours." And if before someone said "You're not one of us," he either grew deathly pale or apoplectically blushed and swore that he was "one uf us."

And now, without changing his colour, he announced plainly: "That's right, I'm not one of you. I am simply the husband of Taisiya Pavlovna, the father of Tolik, the grandson of my grandfather and the head technologist of a factory..."

"The comrade does not understand..."

A division has formed in the river and the stream flows in two directions now. Truth has become differentiated: "ours truth", "your" truth and truth itself. Nowadays, one can call truth anything one wishes.

And as soon as the press prints truth in its purest form, without beating about the bush, instantly that comes into conflict with "our" truth, a truth which pursues "our" noble goals, but never attains them. And quite naturally it becomes angry when simple truths come to the surface – why is it taking so long for us to achieve our goal? And, having learned, from non-reliable sources, that the end justifies the means (and great ends mean great means), begins to implement these means. On food? For roads? For medicine? For "art that belongs to the people?" For the pyjamas of future parliamentarians? For the socks of today's parliamentarians?..

No, again it is the struggle between "our" unity and our opposites.

The great opposition continues, in streets and offices. And there is no antidote to be found... "We" has fluttered away! How?! Completely by accident!.. Well, it's still us. "We" isn't a bad pronoun. If Nevzorov's "Ours" is OK, what about Zamyatin's "We"? A great political story may be in the making. Imagine: "Once upon a time," Sobchak, say, reads the story, "we: Mikhail Gorbachev, and his wife, Boris Yeltsin, Landsbergis, Nazarbaev, Vitaly Alksnis, Gavriil Popov and yours truly were sitting around a keg of kindzmarauli at Zviad Gamsakhurdia's place. We didn't begin, we were waiting for Solzhenitsyn and Rostropovich... Then the doorbell rang. We opened the door and in walked Bush himself with Kohl! And both of them were carrying packages of food! Just in case."

Yuri Sokolov

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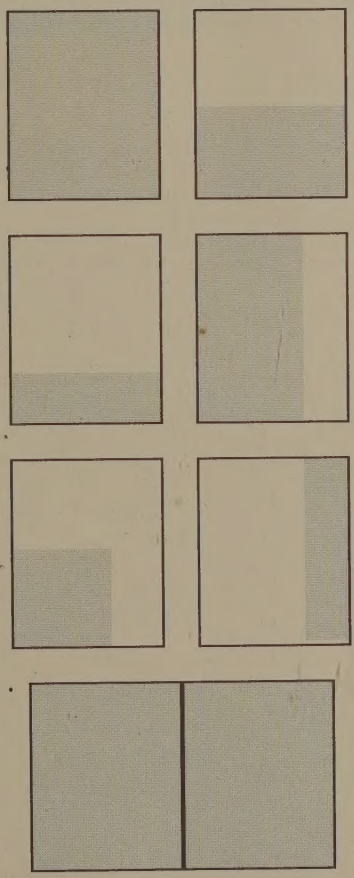

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